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6

JERUSALEM DELIVERED.

VOL. I.

THE
JERUSALEM DELIVERED
OF
TORQUATO TASSO.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY

SIR JOHN KINGSTON JAMES, BARONET, M.A.,
Corresponding Member of the Royal Academy della Crusca.

'O Victor, unsurpassed in modern song' (BYRON).

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.



LONDON:
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1884.

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TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE
PRINCESS VICTORIA OF BOURBON
(CAPUA).

I little deemed when first I sought thy name,
To grace the efforts of my idle hours,
That thou my indolent nature couldst inflame
With the desire in this cold clime of ours,
To acclimatise thy native country's flowers ;
Nor had I in Torquato's magic lore,
Not in Erminia's love, Armida's bowers
Found inspiration equal thine—of yore
Such drew the enraptured bard from lovely Eleonore.

From her proud race thy princely sire is sprung,
Its azure streams meander in thy veins,
And as I echo what the minstrel sung,
I trace in those fair-worded, high-flown strains,
Where he his idol in Sophronia feigns—
The prototype of thee in her he loved ;
Thy peerless beauty now the world enchains,
As Leonora once his being moved,
Thy rival graces have thy kindred lineage proved.

Yet not alone thy beauty and thy birth,
 I fain would in this transitory lay
 Immortalise as noblest upon earth,
 These patent are to all—but only they
 Who know thy temperament's unceasing play,
 Can realise its all absorbing power,
 Or feel the warmth of its unclouded ray :
 Aye—tho' around the storms of fortune lower,
 Thy rainbow smiles to light can turn the darkest hour.

Like bold Clorinda, thou canst back the steed,
 And wing the wild bird in its rapid flight ;
 Nor, tho' thou dost in such pursuits exceed,
 Fails thy more ample nature to unite
 Those gentler graces which she held in slight.
 Unlike Clorinda, thou dost not disdain
 Our eyes to gladden, and our ears delight,
 Now on the canvas, nature's self to feign,
 Now rival seraph's song by thy bewitching strain.

On the blue margent of the Midland sea
 A city lies, beyond expression fair,
 The heaven-descended, bright Parthenope ;
 With it none made by mortal can compare :
 Ah! couldst thou to its Paradise repair,
 The rare perfection of thy mind and face
 Had soon created a new Tasso there,
 A living Leonora to replace
 The lost—were found in thee—fair scion of her race.

I then had ventured not my voice to raise,
But left to poets of thy classic land
To shed the lustre of its golden rays
O'er thee, now exiled from its sunny strand.
E'en as I write, my dreams, my thoughts expand,
In hopes thy banishment may soon be o'er ;
There—thou hadst with delighted vision scanned
The Siren's isle, and on that haunted shore
Hadst to their number added one enchantress more.

Then I had not thy glorious countryman
Presented in this barbarous disguise,
To one who in their native splendour can
See to what height his lofty numbers rise :
Still as thy mother's tongue, I deemed thine eyes
Might trace some memories which its sight endear,
Waking sweet thoughts of home—in this surmise
To thee I dedicate my task, nor fear
How the cold world will judge, if it but please thine ear.

P R E F A C E.

HAVING been elected a corresponding member of the Royal Academy della Crusca in testimony of their approval of my translation of the "Gerusalemme liberata," I have deemed it a duty to revise and correct this present edition in the hope of rendering it still more worthy of that high honour.

J. K. J.

London, 1884.

ARGUMENTS

TO

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CANTO I.

Introduction—Invocation—Summary of the Crusaders' conquests—The Supreme Being sends the archangel Gabriel to Godfrey, who is encouraged to march without further delay upon Jerusalem—Speech of Godfrey—Speech of Peter the Hermit—Godfrey elected captain of the host—He reviews the troops—Catalogue of the Christian forces—They begin their advance—Consternation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the King Aladine—His character and preparations for resistance I

CANTO II.

Aladine, instigated thereto by Ismeno, who promises to make it an effectual palladium to Jerusalem, seizes an image of the Virgin that was concealed in one of the Christian churches and places it in the royal mosque—In the course of the night the statue is removed therefrom—The king, enraged at not being able to discover the author of its removal, resolves upon a general massacre of his Christian subjects—Episode of Ólindo and Sophronia—The latter accuses herself of the theft in order to save the others, and when at the stake is saved by Clorinda—The Christian host are met at Emmaus by Alethes and Arganté, ambassadors from the King of Egypt—Alethes' speech—Godfrey's reply—Declaration of war—Godfrey dismisses the ambassadors with presents—Alethes returns to Egypt to acquaint the king with Godfrey's determination—Arganté proceeds to Jerusalem to assist in its defence 24

CANTO III.

The Christian army arrives before Jerusalem—Their emotions on the first view of the Holy City—Alarm of the inhabitants—Clorinda makes the first sally—Encounters a foraging party and kills Gardo, its leader—Godfrey orders Tancredi to advance to their support—Meanwhile Erminia, daughter of the deceased king of Antioch, points out to Aladine, from the top of a high tower, the principal leaders of the Christian army—Encounter and subsequent interview between Clorinda and Tancredi—The Pagans are driven back—Arganté restores the battle—Dudoné advances at the head of the Adventurers, and again drives them back, but is himself slain by Arganté—Godfrey calls off his troops—He reconnoitres the town and encamps near the South Gate—Dudoné's funeral—Workmen despatched to a neighbouring forest to fell timber for the construction of warlike engines . 49

CANTO IV.

Satan, or, as he is here called, Pluto, enraged at the successes of the Christians, convenes a council in the infernal regions to consider the best means of opposing their further progress—His speech—He despatches his emissaries to the upper world—At their instigation, Idraotes, Prince of Damascus, a magician, sends his niece Armida, who is likewise an enchantress, to endeavour to seduce their chiefs—Her arrival at the Christian camp, and interview with Eustace—He introduces her to Godfrey—Her feigned account of herself and request for assistance, which Godfrey refuses; but at length, at the instance of his brother Eustace, and others of the younger knights, he permits ten of their number to accompany her—Her stratagems to induce others to join her 69

CANTO V.

Eustace, being in love with Armida, persuades Rinaldo, of whom he is jealous, to solicit the place of captain of the Adventurers, vacant by Dudoné's death—Germando, brother of the King of Norway, aspires to the same post, and being instigated by an evil spirit, uses expressions to the disparagement of Rinaldo, who kills him in the face of the whole army—Godfrey having expressed a determination to punish the offender, Rinaldo, by the advice of Guelpho and Tancredi, quits the camp—Armida obtains permission from Godfrey to depart with the assistance he had pledged himself to grant her—The ten champions are

	PAGE
chosen by lot, and are secretly followed by Eustace and others, whose names were not drawn—Godfrey receives intelligence that the Egyptian expedition has sailed, and that a convoy of provisions on its way from his ships to the camp has been intercepted by the Arabs—Fears of famine in the camp—Godfrey's speech to the soldiers	94

CANTO VI.

Arganté challenges the Christian camp to single combat—His challenge accepted on their part by Tancredi—Combat between them—Heralds interfere and stop the encounter on account of the approach of night—Account of Erminia and of her love for Tancredi—Her anxiety during the combat—In her eagerness to learn the state of his wounds, she puts on Clorinda's armour and leaves the city by night with the intention of proceeding to the Christian encampment—She is intercepted on her way thither by a party of Frank soldiers, and obliged to fly—Tancredi, who supposes her to be Clorinda, quits the camp, and hastens to her aid	118
--	-----

CANTO VII.

Erminia in her flight is carried by her horse to the banks of the Jordan, where she remains some time in a shepherd's cottage—Tancredi, who loses his way in pursuit of her, is treacherously conducted to Armida's castle, into which he is entrapped and confined—Meanwhile, the time being expired, Arganté presents himself to renew the combat—In Tancredi's absence, Raymond, not willing that Godfrey should expose himself, presents himself to Arganté as Tancredi's substitute—They fight—The compact of the battle is broken by an archer wounding Raymond—Terrific storm, during which the Christians are driven into their intrenchments	147
---	-----

CANTO VIII.

A Danish warrior arrives at the Christian camp—Relates the slaughter of the Danish crusaders, of whom he is the sole survivor, and the heroic death of Sweno their prince and leader—Discord in the camp on account of the false news of Rinaldo's death, spread by Argillan—Godfrey quells the mutiny, and casts the ringleader into prison	178
--	-----

CANTO IX.

Solyman, instigated by Alecto, attacks by night the Christian camp—Latinus and his five sons slain—The archangel Michael sent down by God—drives back the dæmons—Argillan escapes from prison—His exploits—While the conflict is still doubtful, a band of fifty Crusaders that had followed Armida unexpectedly appear and decide it in favour of the Christians, who pursue the Pagans with great havoc to the city walls 200

CANTO X.

Solyman resolves to join the Egyptian army—On his way thither meets Ismeno, who takes him back to Jerusalem in an enchanted car—They enter the city by a subterranean passage, and make their way to where the king sits in council—Speeches of the king, of Arganté, and of Orcano—Indignation of Solyman—Godfrey receives from the knights that were seduced by Armida an account of their adventures—They disprove the report of Rinaldo's death—His future fame foretold by Peter the Hermit 225

CANTO I.

I

THE pious arms and pious Chief I sing,
Who the great sepulchre of Jesu freed ;
Much help did he in field and council bring,
And much he suffered in the glorious deed ;
And Hell in vain opposed him, and in vain
Afric, allied with Asia, drew the sword :
Since Heaven its favour gave him, and again
His errant comrades to the Cross restored.

II

O Muse ! not thou that dost enwreath thy brow
With fading laurels upon Helicon ;
But high in heaven, 'mid choirs celestial, Thou
That hast of deathless stars a golden crown,
Do thou my breast with heavenly warmth inspire,
My song illumine, nor thy grace decline,
If I the Truth embellish, or attire
These leaves in other ornaments than thine.

III

Childlike, the world runs ever there, where most
The attractive Muse pours forth her sweetest strains ;
And Truth, enriched by flowing song, thou know'st,
Through its disguise the most reluctant gains ;
Thus the fond mother o'er the vase's lips
Spreads the sweet snare, which hersick child she gives
Deluded, he the bitter potion sips,
And from his own delusion life receives.

B

IV

August Alphonso, who from Fortune's shocks
 Didst rescue, and bring safely into port
 Me—wandering pilgrim—who, 'mid waves and rocks,
 Was tossed about, and made their cruel sport :
 Receive these leaves of mine with kindly ken,
 Which unto thee I dedicate, I vow.
 The day may come that my prophetic pen
 Dare write of thee what it foreshadows now.

V

And right it were (if aye the Christians make
 A league of peace together, and essay,
 With ships and banded armies, to retake
 From the fierce Thracian his ill-gotten prey,)
 That unto thee command on shore belong,
 Or on the sea, if it possess more charms :
 Of Godfrey emulous, meanwhile hear my song,
 Arm, and prepare to meet the shock of arms.

VI

Six years had nearly passed since in the East,
 The Christian host began their great Crusade ;
 By storm Nicea they had won, nor ceased
 Till Antioch fell by art's strategic aid,
 Which they then held against the Persian ; they
 Then took Tortosa from Judæa's king ;
 To winter's rigour afterwards gave way ;
 Awaiting anxiously the coming spring.

VII

And now the wintry season was near gone
 That gave their arms a truce, and spring was nigh,
 When the Eternal Father from His throne—
 Placed in the purest regions of the sky,
 And raised as far above the starry sphere,
 As it from hell's abyss—to look down deigned
 And in a moment, at a glance, from there
 Saw what the world within itself contained

VIII

All things He saw, and, then in Palestine,
Upon the Christian princes fixed His eyes,
And with that look of His which, man's design,
Can to its inmost secrets scrutinise ;
Godfrey perceived, who with impatience burns
To drive the Pagans from the Holy Town,
And filled with faith and holy fervour, spurns
All mortal glory, riches, and renown.

IX

But saw in Baldwin one whose every thought
On worldly grandeur and repute was bent ;
In Tancred one who held his life at nought,
So much his heart did hopeless love torment ;
Boemond, in his new realm of Antioch, saw
Found institutions, and with resolute rod
Establish order, while imposing law,
And rites, and worship, of the one true God ;

X

And wrapped up so entirely in that thought,
That he all other enterprise forgets ;
Marked with what warlike soul Rinaldo's freight,
And how his spirit at inaction frets ;
His blind devotion viewed in honour's cause,
Free from all lust of empire or of gold ;
Saw him intent on Guelpho's sayings pause,
Example learning of the illustrious old.

XI

But when the world's Omniscient King had scanned
The inmost bent of these and other hearts,
Gabriel He summoned from the angelic band,
Who 'mid the first sustained the second parts,
And between God and better spirits was
Interpreter and herald. Down he bears
To earth's low regions Heaven's eternal laws,
And thence brings back to Heaven man's zeal and prayers.

XII

God thus His herald spoke : ' Go, Godfrey find
 And ask the cause of his delay from me.
 Why doth he not renew the war, designed
 Enslaved, oppressed Jerusalem to free ?
 Let him the chiefs to council call, and shame
 To this emprise the slow : Their captain, he—
 I him elect, and they shall do the same,
 His subjects then, that now companions be.'

XIII

Such God's command. At the immortal sound
 Gabriel to execute the task began :
 With air he girt his viewless form around,
 Yet made it subject to the sense of man ;
 Limbs of a man he feigned, and human face,
 But left the light of heavenly splendour there ;
 Assumed the age when youth takes childhood's place,
 And with bright rays adorned his flaxen hair.

XIV

White wings, whose tips were fringed with gold he wore,
 Unflinching, swift, and pliable : with these
 He cleaves the clouds and winds, and passes o'er,
 In flight sublime, the low-lying lands and seas.
 Thus clad, the heavenly messenger descending
 Down to the world the Father's message brings,
 And first o'er Lebanon his course suspending,
 There poised himself upon his balanced wings.

XV

Thence shooting downward, his precipitous flight
 Directed straightway to Tortosa's shore ;
 In the east was rising the sun's new-born light,
 A part was out, but 'neath the waters more.
 Godfrey was offering up his matin prayer,
 A daily habit which he never ceased,
 When with the sun, but still more bright and fair,
 Appeared the radiant angel from the east.

XVI

Who to Prince Godfrey said : 'The moment, lo !
For making war, is opportune for thee ;
Why then the opportunity forego,
From her vile yoke Jerusalem to free ?
Do thou in council the camp's chiefs collect,
And spur the slothful to this glorious end ;
God for their leader doth thyself elect,
And they to thee submissively will bend.

XVII

' In me God sends His herald—I reveal
To thee His mind. Of glorious victory
What hopes should thence inflame thee, and what zeal
For the great hosts entrusted unto thee !'
This said, he ceased ; and vanishing from sight,
Flew back to heaven's serenest, loftiest part.
Prince Godfrey paused—the language and the light
His eyes so dazzled, so amazed his heart.

XVIII

But when he had recovered and discerned
Who came, who sent him, and what had been said,
If erst he wished, he now intensely burned
To end the war which he was named to head.
Not that to see himself in heaven preferred
Did with ambition his pure breast inspire,
But his own will was by God's will more stirred,
And warmer waxed, as sparkles in a fire.

XIX

Then his associate heroes and brave friends,
Near him encamped, to council he invites ;
Message on message, word on word, he sends,
And with his summons always prayers unites.
All that might valour wake in them that dozed,
Or in the generous greater warmth instil,
He seemed to have found, and with such charm disposed,
That while he pleased the heart he forced the will.

XX

The leaders came, and all the rest complied,
 Except Boëmondo, with Prince Godfrey's call
 Part camped without, part bivouacked inside
 The rampired circuit of Tortosa's wall.
 The army's magnates now assembled were—
 A glorious council on a solemn day—
 When pious Godfrey with majestic air
 And voice sonorous thus began to say :

XXI

' Warriors of God, whom heaven's great King elects,
 Of His true faith the losses to restore ;
 You whom He has protected and protects
 From storms at sea and hostile arms on shore,
 So that within a few brief years our swords
 Many rebellious kingdoms overcame,
 And 'mong the conquered and subjected hordes
 Have spread His victor ensigns and His name ;

XXII

' We did not leave our cherished homes and wives,
 And tender pledges (if I judge aright),
 Nor to the faithless sea expose our lives,
 Nor seek the perils of a distant fight,
 To gain a vulgar shout of short-lived sound
 And hold possession of a barbarous coast :
 In this what poor return should we have found,
 And to our soul's perdition, what blood lost !

XXIII

' But the great end our inmost wishes spoke
 Was to storm Sion's noble walls, and free
 Our fellow Christians from the unworthy yoke
 Of hard and such revolting slavery ;
 Founding in Palestine a new realm, where
 The faithful safely could to Jesus bow,
 And whither pious pilgrim might repair
 The Tomb to worship, and perform his vow.

XXIV

' Thus then till now our deeds in risk are great—
Greater in labour, small in honour's cause,
But to our purpose nought, if we translate
Our conquering arms to other lands, or pause.
What good to have led from Europe to the war
Such hosts, and ravaged Asiatic ground?
When the results of our great movement are,
Not kingdoms raised, but ruins scattered round.

XXV

' He who would found an empire must not seek
To raise its structure on terrestrial base,
Where few his faith confess or language speak,
'Mid faithless myriads of an alien race;
Where it is idle from the Greeks to hope,
And Western succour is removed so far,
But he makes ruins that around him ope,
And form beneath their weight his sepulchre.

XXVI

' Turks, Persians, Antioch (an illustrious sound,
No less magnificent in fact than name),
Were not our own works, but from God redound,
Nor can we such miraculous victories claim;
But if we now distort and turn our strength
Against that end the Giver purposed, we
May lose, I fear, His favour, and at length
Become a byword and a mockery.

XXVII

' Ah, God forbid! there were a single one
That would so meanly to his grace respond.
No—With beginnings brilliantly begun,
Let the work's woof and finish correspond;
Now that the season favours our design,
Now that the passes of the land are free,
What hinders us to reach at Salem's shrine,
The goal and crowning-point of victory?

XXVIII

‘Princes, to you I solemnly protest,
 And this will ever upon record stand,
 Its truth ev’n now the saints in heaven attest
 The time for our great emprise is at hand ;
 That may be doubtful which is certain now,
 Less opportune for us the more delayed,
 And I forebode, if our advance be slow,
 That Egypt will the hostile Paynim aid.’

XXIX

He ceased : brief whispering followed on his words,
 When the famed hermit Peter rose. He made
 One of the council with the mightiest lords,
 And was prime author of the great Crusade.
 ‘I second what has been by Godfrey moved,
 No room for doubt there is, the truth’s so plain,
 By him established, and by you approved :
 One word I add his reasoning to sustain.

XXX

‘When I the wrongs and injuries call to mind,
 Which, as if rivals, ye have borne and done,
 When cross opinions, and your plans I find
 Obstructed in their course, though scarce begun,
 To one profound original cause do I
 Attribute every quarrel and delay—
 To that authority, which, balanced by
 Conflicting voice of numbers, none obey.

XXXI

‘Where one alone commands not—upon whom
 The choice of his subordinates depends,
 The worthy’s honour and the culprit’s doom—
 Confusion with authority contends.
 Of friendly members, then, one body make,
 And let one head the others guide and rein,
 Let one alone the crown and sceptre take,
 Let one the semblance of a king sustain.’

XXXII

Here paused the sage. What thoughts, O sacred Fire,
What soul is proof, blest Spirit, 'gainst thy arts ?
Thou didst the hermit with these words inspire,
Thou didst impress them on the warriors' hearts,
Removing all ingrafted, innate love,
Of independence or ambitious aim ;
So Guelph and William are the first to move,
And pious Godfrey as their chief proclaim.

XXXIII

The rest approve, and to him delegate
Full powers in council and command to bear,
His, laws on vanquished nations to dictate,
And when and where he pleases war declare :
The rest, his former equals, are to pay
To him obedience as their sovereign head.
Concluded this, Fame, light-winged, flew away,
And thro' a thousand tongues the tidings spread.

XXXIV

He then confronts the soldiers, and appears
To them well worthy such high rank to bear :
Receiving their salute and warlike cheers
With a majestic yet benignant air.
But when he had acknowledged their display
Of love and loyalty, he straight withdrew,
Commanding the whole camp, the following day
Should, ranged in order, pass in grand review.

XXXV

Beyond his wont translucent and serene,
In the flushed orient rose the morrow's sun,
When 'neath his flag was each Crusader seen
Armed, as the day to dart his beams begun ;
And showed himself in all his brave array
To pious Godfrey, wheeling on the grass.
He kept his place, and saw the grand display
Of marshalled horse and foot before him pass.

XXXVI

O Memory ! in whose charge inviolate
 The guardianship of all things is reposed,
 Inform me with thy virtue to relate
 What chiefs, what legions, that great camp composed ;
 Re-echo may the glory of their morn,
 Though voiceless now, and black by ages made :
 Snatched from thy treasures, may my tongue adorn
 That which all time may hear, nor ever fade.

XXXVII

The French were first to muster in advance,
 Erst by Prince Hugo the king's brother led ;
 All were selected from the Isle of France,
 A fine large country by four rivers fed.
 When Hugo died, that fierce and battailous band
 The golden lilies' cognisance pursued
 Under Clothaire's illustrious command,
 Who, if else perfect, lacketh royal blood.

XXXVIII

A thousand sheathed in heaviest armour are ;
 Equal in numbers the next squadron came,
 Who with the first were fully on a par,
 In look, in nature, discipline and fame :
 All Normans, guided to the holy war
 By their own Robert, Duke of Normandy.
 Then William and the pious Ademar,
 Priests of the people, lead their squadrons by.

XXXIX

And these, for whom nought formerly, but prayer
 And holy offices had any charms,
 Beneath the helmet press their flowing hair,
 And practise now the cruel use of arms.
 From Orange and its confines on the Rhone,
 Four hundred cavalry the former brought ;
 The latter led the men of Puy, who shone
 In equal numbers, nor less bravely fought.

XL

Prince Baldwin next advances, leading on,
 With his own Boulognese, his brother's band,
 Since pious Godfrey ceded him his own
 When chosen captain, captains to command.
 To him the gallant Earl of Chartres succeeds,
 A valiant knight and prudent counsellor ;
 He brings four hundred horse—and Baldwin leads
 Three times that number mounted to the war.

XLI

Prince Guelpho occupies the adjoining space,
 Whose high estate is equalled by his worth ;
 Who from his father's Latin stock can trace
 Through Este's house his own Italian birth ;
 But German by descent in the female line,
 He's now a Guelph, and ruleth in the west,
 Carinthia, and 'twixt Danube and the Rhine
 Those realms the Sueves and Rhetians once possessed.

XLII

To that which was his mother's heritage,
 He joined by conquest great and glorious lands,
 And hence brings those who in their generous rage
 Would face e'en Death itself, when he commands :
 Who in warm dwellings cheat the frost and snow,
 And winter pass in feasts and jovial cheer.
 Five thousand erst, but scarce a third part now
 (Sole remnant of the Persian war) is here.

XLIII

Next follows on that flaxen, fair-haired race
 Who dwell 'twixt France, Germania and the main,
 Which Rhine and Meuse both inundate—a place
 Fruitful in cattle and all kinds of grain.
 And the islanders, who 'gainst the ocean's rise
 Make high embankments to restrain its ire ;
 Which, not content with ships and merchandise,
 Swallows whole towns, and provinces entire.

XLIV

Each is a thousand strong ; in one command
 Another Robert leads them proudly on.
 Somewhat more numerous is the British band,
 Led by Prince William, the king's younger son.
 The English bowmen are ; with them come friends
 Who dwell still nearer the north pole : all these
 From her dense woods remote Hibernia sends,
 That distant Thule of the northern seas.

XLV

Next comes Tancredi—nor 'mid all is seen,
 Except Rinaldo, a more puissant knight,
 More noble in appearance or in mien,
 More chivalrous or fair ; and if a slight
 Shadow of error cloud his native worth,
 The fault is Love's, who wakened wild desires.
 Love at first sight, that took 'mid arms its birth,
 And upon memory feeding strength acquires.

XLVI

The story goes, that on that glorious day
 The Franks had routed Persia in the fight,
 Victorious Tancred, wearied from the fray,
 At length desisted to pursue their flight,
 Seeking for his parched lips and drooping flanks
 Refreshment and repose ; by chance then strayed
 To where a fountain gemm'd with emerald banks,
 Woo'd him to rest beneath the summer shade.

XLVII

When suddenly before him he beheld
 All arm'd except the head, a beauteous maid :
 Pagan she was, and by like cause impelled,
 Had come herself to rest beneath the shade.
 He saw, and burned : her lovely countenance
 Bewitched him so that he fell deep in love.
 Wondrous ! that love scarce born should thus entrance
 The heart of man, and so all powerful prove.

XLVIII

She donned her casque, and but that others came,
 Would have assailed her adversary ; she
 Then left her prize : nor was the haughty dame
 A fugitive but from necessity.
 But in his heart her flushed and beautiful face
 A life-like image of itself enwove,
 And present ever was the act—the place,
 Imperishable fuel to his love.

XLIX

And easy 'tis in his sad face to read,
 ' This man's in love and feeds a hopeless flame,'
 As sighing deeply without taking heed,
 Dejected, downcast, Prince Tancredi came.
 Eight hundred cavalry escorted him,
 And with him left Campania's sunny plain,
 (That pride of nature !) and the hills that limn
 Their teeming bosoms in the blue Tyrrhene.

L

Behind them Greece two hundred men supplied,
 In no defensive iron armour bound ;
 Each has a short sword pendent on one side,
 And bows and quivers on their backs resound.
 Hardened from work, their horses are like wire,
 Proof 'gainst fatigue, in diet spare and slight ;
 As ready to attack as to retire,
 They in loose order spread, and flying, fight.

LI

Tatin commands the troop—the only Greek
 That Latin arms accompanied was he.
 Shame, shame, O Greece ! burns not thy conscious cheek ?
 Was not the battle near enough to thee ?
 And yet a calm spectator thou couldst be,
 And wait those mighty deeds' result so long !
 If thou'rt so vile a slave, thy slavery
 Is justice (nay, complain not) and no wrong.

LII

Lo last in order, but the first in fame,
 In valour, skill, and honourable scars,
 The hero squadron of Adventurers came,
 Terror of Asia, thunderbolts of Mars.
 Argo, no more thy Minyans vaunt ; nor boast,
 Arthur, of thy knight-errants of romance :
 Your old achievements in their deeds are lost,—
 But worthy who to lead such combatants ?

LIII

Dudon of Consa is their chief ; for since
 'Twas hard to judge their rank and worth between,
 The others had submitted to that prince,
 Who had much more achieved and more things seen ;
 Sedate, and past his manhood's prime, he shows,
 Tho' grey, that in him still fresh sap abounds,
 And scars imprinted on his brow disclose
 The noble marks of no ignoble wounds.

LIV

Eustace is 'mong the foremost : his own worth
 Makes him renowned, his brother Godfrey more.
 Gernando, too, Norwegian prince by birth,
 Who vaunts his titles, coronets, and power.
 Undying Fame gives Balnavilla place,
 And Engerlan, amid the noblest there ;
 And 'mong the bravest that the squadron grace,
 Gentonio, Rambald, and two Gerards are.

LV

Ubaldo and Rosmondo are much praised,
 Of Lancaster's proud duchy the proud heir ;
 Nor shall Obizzo's gallant name be razed
 By envious time, that would no memories spare ;
 Nor the three Lombard brothers be concealed,
 Achilles, Sforza, and bold Palamed ;
 Nor Otho, who by conquest gained the shield,
 Where the child issues from the dragon's head.

LVI

Nor can I Guasco nor Roddolph pass by,
 Nor one or other Guido—famous both ;
 And Guernier and Everard ungratefully
 To leave in nameless silence I am loth.
 Edward, Gildippe, whither force you me,
 Tired with this record, O uxorious pair?
 In death you shall not disunited be,
 That were united even in the war.

LVII

What learn we not among the schools of Love?
 There she was taught to be a soldier, whom
 Nothing from her dear husband can remove,
 And both their lives hang on one single doom ;
 Blow never falls that injures only one,
 Or can the other from its pain exclude :
 She prostrate falls when he is stricken down,
 And he pours forth his soul if she her blood.

LVIII

But beyond all that formed that brilliant show
 Is young Rinaldo—none with him can vie ;
 He raises sweetly fierce his regal brow,
 And fixed on him alone is every eye.
 Outstripping age and hope, but scarce appear
 The flowers, than they to fruit mature give place ;
 Armed cap-à-pie, to see him charge, you'd swear
 'Twas fiery Mars ; Cupid to see his face.

LIX

Him to Bertholdo fair Sophia bore,
 Upon the Adige's banks, their native nest—
 Sophia to Bertholdo ; but before
 He as a child was taken from the breast,
 Matilda took him, brought him up, and taught
 In every princely art, and there he stayed,
 Till the trump, pealing in the orient, caught
 His ear and led him to the great Crusade.

LX

Then, nor three lustres could the stripling boast,
 He fled alone by unknown ways, and passed
 The Egean billows and the Grecian coast,
 And reached the camp in distant lands at last.
 Most noble flight ! which rare example set
 For imitation by his noble kin.
 This is the third year that he wars, and yet
 Scarce blooms the down upon his boyish chin.

LXI

The horse now passed, marched past the infantry,
 Raimondo at their head—he ruled Toulouse,
 And from the Pyrenees, between the sea
 And the broad Garonne, his division chose ;
 In all four thousand, armed and smartly drilled,
 Who used to hardships and most patient are—
 A gallant race ; nor could a chief more skilled,
 Or more intrepid, lead them to the war.

LXII

But Stephen of Amboise, of Blois, and Tours,
 Leads to the holy war five thousand on :
 A race that cannot much fatigue endure,
 Tho' in the pomp of fulgent steel they shone.
 The country like itself produces men,
 And these, like theirs, are joyous, soft, and gay ;
 In the first shock they fiercely charge, and then
 Faint in the fight, grow slack, and soon give way.

LXIII

Alcasto comes the third. Such lowering face
 Of yore had Capaneus when threatening Thebes.
 Six thousand Swiss—a bold and hardy race—
 From the Alps he brings. The steel which once broke
 glebes
 Or turned the fallow furrow with its share,
 They to new shapes had turned for nobler things ;
 And the rude hand that erst of flocks took care,
 Now hurls defiance fearlessly at kings.

LXIV

Beneath the lofty standard's outstretched wings,
 That bears St. Peter's diadem and keys,
 With him seven thousand foot Camillus brings,
 Glistening in armour, from across the seas.
 O'erjoy'd, Heaven chose him for an emprise, where
 He might renew his ancestors' renown,
 And prove that if his Latin soldiers were
 Wanting in aught, 'twas discipline alone.

LXV

Now all the squadrons had marched past him, all
 In order of review, this being the last,
 When Godfrey sent the leading chiefs to call,
 And to them said, as round him they were massed :
 ' My orders are, the host move swiftly down,
 Soon as to-morrow's dawn regilds the east,
 So as to reach the consecrated town
 Early as possible, when looked for least.

LXVI

' Prepare then for the march, and for the fight ;
 Nay more, my friends, prepare for victory.'
 Language so bold, from such a cautious knight,
 Inspired each soldier with fresh energy :
 All are prepared to march when dawn appears,
 Nor from impatience can get any rest ;
 But provident Bouillon is not without fears,
 Though close he locked them in his silent breast ;

LXVII

Since he had from reliable report,
 Heard Egypt's king was posted in the line
 Of Gaza's walls—a fine commanding fort,
 Built to o'erawe the power of Palestine—
 And scarce could deem that one, accustomed so
 To deeds of bloodshed, would remain at rest.
 Thinking in him to find a bitter foe,
 His faithful herald, Henry, he addressed :

C

LXVIII

‘With all despatch, I want thee to repair,
 In a light pinnace, to the coast of Greece,
 Where should arrive (thus writes me one who ne'er
 Errs in his judgment, or gives false advice),
 A royal youth of most undaunted soul,
 Who seeks to join us in our great emprise ;
 Prince of the Danes, from regions near the pole,
 He leads a numerous band as our allies.

LXIX

‘But, since the false Greek emperor may chance
 On him to practise his accustomed arts,
 To urge him back, or turn his bold advance,
 Unto, from us remote, outlandish parts ;
 Do thou, my herald and adviser true,
 Dispose him in my name, to that which may
 Profit us both. Tell him to hasten too,
 Since quite unworthy were the least delay.

LXX

‘Return thou not with him, but there remain
 With the Greek monarch, to procure his aid,
 Which he has promised o'er and o'er again,
 And which is due by force of treaties made.'
 Thus spoke and charged his envoy, who, at eve,
 Soon as he had his lord's credentials got,
 Straight hastened his departure and took leave,
 And wearied Godfrey made a truce with thought.

LXXI

The following morn, as soon as opened were
 The lucid orient's portals to the sun,
 The crash of drums and trumpets shook the air,
 And to the march urged every soldier on.
 Less welcome far the sound, in summer's heat,
 Of rumbling thunder, big with hopes of rain,
 Than was, to those stout-hearted legions, sweet
 The haughty summons of that warlike strain.

LXXII

Straightway inflamed with strong religious zeal,
Each with his wonted arms his limbs protects :
Straightway appear bright groups of flashing steel,
As each Crusader 'neath his chief collects.
The marshalled hosts then joined, in gallant show
Their every banner to the breeze unloose,
And in the grand imperial standard, lo !
To Heaven streams proudly the triumphant Cross.

LXXIII

Meanwhile the sun, that in celestial fields
Rolls ever onwards, and ascends on high,
Their armour strikes, and from swords, helms, and shields,
Draws such fierce lightning that it blinds the eye.
With sparks the atmosphere appears to blaze
In one vast conflagration, and the sound
Of clanking iron blends with rampant neighs,
Whose deafening clangour stuns the country round.

LXXIV

The captain, to protect from ambushade
His gallant legions, had detached a band
Of numerous horsemen, lightly armed, and bade
Them scour the circuit of the neighbouring land ;
And in advance sent pioneers of skill,
The roads from all impediments to free,
To lay hills plain, fell woods, and valleys fill,
And that all passes closed might opened be.

LXXV

There is no Pagan host together bound,
No sweeping flood, dense wood, nor mountain crest,
No wall encircled by a moat profound,
That can the Christians' onward march arrest.
Thus doth at times the mighty king of streams
O' heap his banks with irresistible force,
As beyond measure swoln he proudly teems,
Nor is there aught that dare oppose his course.

LXXXVI

Alone the king of Tripoli, perchance,
With arms, men, treasure, under bolt and bar,
Might have delayed the Christian host's advance,
But dared not venture upon open war.
Nay, entertained them freely on his lands,
And both by gifts and embassies appeased,
Accepting terms of peace at Godfrey's hands,
Such as to impose the pious captain pleased.

LXXXVII

Here from Mount Seir, which to the orient rears (1)
Its lofty head, and dominates the town,
Crowds of the faithful, from the tenderest years
Up to extreme old age, came flocking down,
Rejoiced to see the Christian conqueror,
Whom they conversed with, and with stores supplied,
Nor failed to admire the arms the strangers wore.
From them Prince Godfrey had a friendly guide.

LXXXVIII

Ever in hearing of the billows' roar,
By paths direct he led the banded host,
Well knowing that along the adjacent shore,
To give assistance friendly vessels coast,
Which could the camp fully provided keep
With necessary stores, and cause that wheat
Each isle in Greece for him alone did reap,
Their vintage stony Scio and fair Crete.

LXXXIX

Beneath the weight of ships and lighter pines
The waters groan, so that no longer free
Passage is open for the Saracens,
Throughout the wide Mediterranean sea.
Besides the bottoms of Saints George and Mark,
Armed by Venetians and the Genoese,
England and France sent many a gallant bark,
And Holland, and the fertile Sicilies.

LXXX

And these, which were in closest union bound
Together by one will, from various lands
Came freighted deeply, and most amply found,
With all things needful for terrestrial bands ;
Who, finding to dispute their path no foe,
And all the passes on the frontiers free,
With beating hearts and speed redoubled, go
To where Christ suffered mortal agony.

LXXXI

But Fame precedes them, bearing in her flight
A host of true and lying rumours : how
Haply the conquering Paladins unite—
Have marched—nor is there can oppose them now—
What and how strong the squadrons are, portrays
The bravest names, their valour and renown—
Relates their vaunts, and with terrific gaze
The usurpers threatens of the holy town.

LXXXII

Anticipation of impending ill
Is worse perhaps than the ill itself to bear,
As in suspense its victims hang, and still
Catch at each doubtful blast, each breath of air.
Outside and in the dolorous city ran
Confused reports and whispers ; on his part
The king, with peril thus impending, 'gan
To brood dark schemes in his misgiving heart.

LXXXIII

This aged prince, called Aladine, now spent
In his new realm a life of constant fears ;
Most cruel once, but his ferocious bent
Was somewhat softened by increasing years.
He having heard the Christians had designed
To storm the ramparts that his town inclose,
New doubts, mistrustful, with old fears combined,
Fearing his subjects no less than his foes.

LXXXIV

Since in one city mixed together, lived
 Two races of a faith most opposite,
 The weak and lesser part in Christ believed,
 The greater and the strong in Mahomet ;
 But when the king first gained the holy town
 And there resolved to fix his royal seat,
 The public dues he lessened for his own,
 And on the wretched Franks heaped all the weight.

LXXXV

This thought inflaming his ferocity,
 Now cold and torpid from old age, renewed
 And aggravated it to such degree
 That more than ever he's athirst for blood.
 Ferocious thus in summer's heat becomes
 That which in winter seemed a harmless snake ;
 Thus a tamed lion his wild rage resumes
 If any dare his inborn fury wake.

LXXXVI

' I see among these followers of the Cross,
 He cried, ' true signs of new-born joy, and while
 We mourn, they glory in the general loss ;
 Sole 'mid our common grief they seem to smile.
 It may be, hatching snares and treacheries,
 Each how to kill me in his mind debates ;
 Or how to Godfrey and his Frank allies
 Unbar with secrecy the city's gates.

LXXXVII

' But they shall not : their plans I will forestall,
 And to my long pent rancour give full sway.
 I'll make one common slaughter of them all,
 Babes at their mother's breast this hand shall slay ;
 I'll burn their dwellings, nor their temples spare :
 These for the dead shall be a fitting tomb,
 And 'mid their vows, in that their sepulchre
 The priests shall be the first to meet their doom !

LXXXVIII

Thus in his heart the villain planned, nor dared
To thought so ill-imagined give effect ;
And if at length the innocent he spared,
His purpose cowardice, not pity, checked :
Since if one terror makes him pitiless,
A stronger still restrains him and alarms :
He dreads to cut off every chance of peace,
Or rouse too much his foe's victorious arms.

LXXXIX

His gall, therefore, the enfebled craven reins,
And seeks elsewhere to vent his rabid ire :
The rustics' huts he levels, and the plains,
And waving cornfields gives a prey to fire.
No part he leaves entire, uninjured, where
Shelter or food the Frank may find ; nor saves
A single fount, nor doth a river spare,
But with foul poison taints the spotless waves.

XC

Though cruel, cautious, he with providence
Forgets not Salem's safety to ensure :
On three sides perfect was the town's defence.
Northwards alone 'twas somewhat less secure.
But, from his first misgivings, to repair
Its weaker side the king had given commands,
And with all speed large hosts assembled there
Of subject troops and mercenary bands.

CANTO II.

I

WHILE the fell tyrant thus prepared for arms,
To him Ismene came alone one day ;
Ismene, who from the grave can raise by charms
The dead, and animate inanimate clay ;
Ismene, who by mere sound of muttered spell,
Makes Pluto tremble in his dark domains,
And as his slaves employs the imps of hell
In his foul work, and chains them and unchains.

II

A Christian once, he now to Máhomet bows,
But cannot from his former rites refrain—
Nay, oft both laws, of which he little knows,
Confounds in uses impious and profane ;
And now from caves where he was wont to frame
Far from man's eye his unknown arts, in the hour
Of public risk to Aladine he came,
To wicked king more wicked counsellor.

III

' My liege, the dreaded host victorious
Comes, without check it comes,' the wizard said ;
' Do we our duty as behoveth us,
And Heaven and earth will give the valiant aid.
Thou dost the parts of king and captain fill
Most nobly, all things see to and foresee :
As well their duties did the rest fulfil,
A tomb this country for thy foes would be.

IV

'I, for my part, have hither come to share
With thee whatever danger may befall,
And all that can experience, and whate'er
My magic art can do, I promise all.
The angels fallen from heaven I will compel
In our exertions to participate ;
But from what point I will begin the spell,
And in what manner, I will first relate.

V

'Hid in the temple of the Christians lies
A subterranean shrine, where is adored
She whom that herd of bigots idolize
As mother of their born and buried Lord.
A quenchless lamp before her image shines,
Which a veil shroudeth from the public eye,
And round it hang in long extended lines
The votive offerings of credulity.

VI

'Now this their image, seized from thence, I will
Thou carriest off, my liege, with thine own arm,
And in thy temple place it : my weird skill
Shall then employ so magical a charm,
That while it there is guarded, it shall be
For Salem's gates a fatal guard and sure.
In walls impregnable thy monarchy
Shall through new mystic influence be secure.'

VII

He thus persuaded him. Impatiently
Flew to God's sacred temple Aladine,
Forced back the priests, and most irreverently
Seized the chaste image from its sacred shrine,
And bore it off to that accursed fane,
Where with foul rites they oft incensed the Lord.
On the blest image in that place profane
The wizard then his blasphemies outpoured.

VIII

But when in heaven appeared the morrow's light,
 The guard in charge of the polluted fane,
 Not seeing the image where 'twas placed last night,
 And searching for it on all sides in vain,
 Informed the king, who at the tidings grew
 Like one of reason suddenly bereft,
 And justly deemed it was some Christian, who
 Committed had and then concealed the theft.

IX

Whether it were the work of Christian guile,
 Or Heaven did with its influence intervene,
 Indignant that receptacle so vile
 Should harbour her, its Goddess and its Queen,
 Is doubtful still, and it were hard to say
 If the deed should to man or God be given ;
 But it is piety—man giving way—
 To ascribe its dubious authorship to Heaven.

X

The king then made them search on every side,
 Each church, each private dwelling, and awards
 Torture to those that did the image hide,
 And for the informer liberal rewards ;
 And the magician left unturned no stone
 The truth to fathom, but could not succeed ;
 Since, were the act of mortal or its own,
 Heaven, spite of all his spells, concealed the deed.

XI

But when the cruel king perceived that they
 Hid what he deemed the Christians' crime, he turned
 On them his hate, cast all respect away,
 And with intense immoderate anger burned.
 'Revenge myself,' the tyrant cried, 'will I,
 And wreak my fury, let what will befall ;
 Provided that the unknown robber die,
 In one wide ruin let them perish all.

XII

'To find the guilty let the guiltless die,
The just and innocent. But whom call just?
They are guilty all, nor is there one that I
Of the whole brood could ever love or trust :
And even if any of this crime be clear,
Let these new pains for old offences pay.
Up, up, my faithful, up! Why linger here?
Up, up—with fire and sword consume and slay.'

XIII

Thus to the crowd did he his venom vent,
And swift the tidings 'mong the Faithful flew,
Who were bewildered at the imminent
Terror of death presented to their view.
None tried defence or flight—none sought for grace
Or proffered supplication. But released
In a strange manner was that timid race,
And safety found, where it could hope for least.

XIV

In maiden prime there dwelt a maiden there
High-souled and passing beautiful; but she
Seemed for her peerless beauty not to care,
Or only as adorning modesty :
And to her greater merit she withdrew,
And hid her merits beneath humble roof ;
Away from glances of gallants she flew,
And from their honeyed words remained aloof.

XV

But beauty cannot wholly be concealed,
Beauty which but to see is to admire :
Nor e'en had Love consented, who revealed
Her charms and did a youthful bosom fire.
Cupid ! who blind at times now Argus art,
Dost ope and turn, and now blindfold'st the eyes,
Through thee to maiden's bower, most vestal part,
Past thousand guards the glance of lover flies.

XVI

Sophronia she, Olindo he : they were
 Both of one town, in common creed both taught ;
 He was as modest as the maid was fair,
 Much wished, hoped little, and demanded nought,
 Nor dared, or knew not how his love to tell ;
 She spurned or saw him not, or nought perceived.
 This hitherto is what the youth befell ;
 Unseen, unknown, or was but ill received

XVII

Meantime was spread abroad the dire decree
 That doomed the Christians to a dreadful death ;
 When, no less generous than modest, she
 Resolved to save the sharers of her faith.
 Virtue this great thought wakened, but was stayed
 By virginal propriety and shame,
 But virtue won, nay, joined with it and made
 Itself ashamed, while daring shame became.

XVIII

Thro' the dense crowds the maid walked forth alone,
 Nor did her loveliness expose nor hide :
 Wrapt in a veil she went, with eyes cast down,
 Distant her manner was and dignified.
 'Twere hard to say if study or neglect,
 If art or chance her lovely face composed ;
 Her seeming negligence appeared effect
 By nature, love, and friendly Heaven disposed.

XIX

Gazed at by all, on passes without heed
 The high-souled dame, and the king's presence gains,
 Nor tho' his looks breathe fury, would recede,
 But without flinching his fierce look sustains.
 'I come,' she said '(but first, O mighty king,
 Restrain thy minions and thy wrath assuage),
 I come to name, and in thy presence bring
 Secured, the culprit who has roused thy rage.'

XX

Her modest boldness, and the light that flashed
From her majestic, saint-like loveliness,
Almost o'ercame the tyrant, who abashed,
Smoothed his fierce brow, and did his wrath repress.
Then, had he been less stern, or she possessed
Aspect less stern, his heart had been subdued ;
But haughty beauty wins not haughty breast,
Endearments are Love's appetising food.

XXI

Desire it was, amazement, and delight,
If 'twere not love, that moved his villain breast.
'Tell all,' he said, 'my kingly word I plight
That none of mine the Christians shall molest.'
And she, 'The guilty one before you stands :
I took the image. I am she you seek.
The robbery was committed by these hands ;
On me your bloody retribution wreak.'

XXII

Thus her proud head she gave, in prime of youth,
A ransom for the common fate to be.
O noble glorious Falsehood ! Where is Truth
So lovely as to be preferred to thee ?
Doubting awhile the cruel king remained,
And longer than his wont from anger freed,
At length resumed, 'I wish to have explained
Who counselled, and who shared with thee the deed.'

XXIII

And she, 'I would not let another, sire,
Partake my glory in the least degree ;
Alone did I with my own self conspire,
Alone I planned and acted.' 'Then on thee
Alone,' replied infuriate Aladine,
'My vengeful wrath shall fall.' 'I am content,'
She calmly said, 'since all the honour is mine,
That I alone should bear the punishment.'

XXIV

The tyrant now began with freshened ire,
 'Say where thou didst the accursed image hide.'
 'Tis not concealed; I cast it in the fire,
 And deemed the act most laudable,' she cried,
 'As thus at least no unbeliever's hand
 Could more profane our Goddess' sanctity;
 If thou the theft—if thou the thief demand,
 That thou shalt never—this behold in me;

XXV

'Albeit not mine a theft, nor robber I,
 To get back what was wrongfully obtained.'
 The king, still more incensed at her reply,
 Muttered deep threats, nor more his rage restrained.
 Vain are your hopes for grace or pardon now,
 Immaculate heart, fair face, exalted mind!
 And vainly, Love, against his rancour, thou
 An ægis of her beauty hadst designed.

XXVI

Seized is the lovely maid: the cruel king
 Condemns to death by fire those peerless charms.
 Away her mantle and chaste veil they fling,
 And pinion with rough cords her delicate arms.
 Silent she was, and if her stout heart grew
 Ruffled somewhat, no trace of fear was there.
 Her beautiful face now faded to a hue
 Which was not pale, but only passing fair.

XXVII

Quick spread the news, and among others drew
 Olindo there, and soon a crowd collects;
 He the broad fact but not the person knew,
 Yet that it is the loved one half suspects.
 But when in the act he saw the pinioned fair
 Of one not guilty alone, but doomed to die,
 And their vile work the officers prepare,
 Through the dense crowd he burst, and with a cry,

XXVIII

Screamed to the king, 'Not she! not she! you err;
She's guiltless and from vanity vaunts the feat.
How could a lone unpractised girl like her,
Plan, dare, or execute a deed so great?
How were the guards deceived, and from the shrine
How was the image of our saint removed?
Let her say how. The theft, O king, was mine.'
Thus deep, alas! the unloved lover loved!

XXIX

Adding, 'The image from your mosque I stole,
Where it receives the air and light of day;
By night I clomb, and through a little hole
That seemed almost impassable, pushed my way.
As mine the glory was, be mine the pains;
Shall she usurp my martyrdom? this fire
For me ascends to heaven: mine are these chains;
For me alone's prepared the funeral pyre.'

XXX

Sophonra raised her head, and on him bent
Her eyes, where glistened a compassionate tear.
'What art thou come for, wretched innocent?
What rash resolve, what frenzy guides thee here?
Can I not bear without thy aid the breath
Of man's vain anger, and despise his power?
I have a heart, too, that makes light of death,
Nor need companion in this fatal hour.'

XXXI

Thus she appealed, but could not cause that he
His words retracted or would change his thought.
Oh noble sight! in such dispute to see
Exalted virtue and affection brought!
Where for the victor the reward is death,
And life is what the vanquished has to fear!
This more provokes the king: as with one breath
To accuse themselves they fondly persevere.

XXXII

It seemed that thus his orders they contemn,
 And that in scorn of him they scorn the pain.
 'Believed be both,' he cried, 'let both of them
 Win, and their fitting recompense obtain.'
 Then gave the sign; the sergeants were not slack
 Around the youth the fatal chain to place.
 Both were now bound to the same stake, and back
 To back was turned, and face concealed from face.

XXXIII

Round them the pyre stood ready piled, and nursed
 Already had the bellows' breath the flames,
 When into piteous plants Olindo burst,
 And to his pinioned partner thus exclaims:
 'Are these the bonds, then, that I fondly thought
 Would us in life-long company unite?
 Are these the flames with which my own heart caught,
 I hoped in thine would equal fervour light?

XXXIV

'Far other flames Love promised: other knots
 Than those thwart Destiny preparèd hath.
 Too, ah! too long, it has disjoined our lots,
 But now unites them close enough in death.
 Still, 'tis some comfort if by anguish torn
 Perish thou must, to share thy pyre, if I
 Cannot thy bed: thy fate alone I mourn,
 But not mine own, since at thy side I die.

XXXV

'And oh! my lot how altogether blest,
 How passing sweet my martyrdom would be,
 Could I obtain, united breast to breast,
 Within thy lips to breathe my soul away;
 And that, expiring the same time with me,
 Thou pour'dst in mine thy last, thy parting sighs!
 Thus through his scalding tears he spoke, and she
 Him gently chid, and counselled in this wise:

XXXVI

'Far other thoughts, and of a loftier kind,
 Far other plaints, dear friend, this dread hour needs ;
 Why think not of thy sins, and call to mind
 The crown God promises for virtuous deeds ?
 In His name borne, sweet will thy sufferings be,
 With joy for His supernal seat prepare ;
 Behold the heavens, how beautiful, and see
 The sun that cheers us and invites us there.'

XXXVII

At this the Pagans wept aloud ; their dole
 The Faithful much more silently expressed,
 And even something like compassion stole
 (Unusual feeling) through the king's hard breast ;
 He felt it coming, and was vexed, nor would
 Yield—turned his eyes away, and left the spot.
 No tears, Sophronia, thy fair cheeks bedewed :
 Wept by them all, alone thou weepest not.

XXXVIII

While in such risk they were, a warrior came
 (At least he seemed such) of most princely mien,
 Whose foreign arms and strange attire proclaim
 That he in distant land had journeying been ;
 His helmet for its crest a tigress bore,
 A badge that drew unto itself all eyes,
 The badge Clorinda aye in battle wore,
 Whence that 'tis she they rightly all surmise.

XXXIX

From childhood she, and now in maiden bloom,
 All occupations of her sex disdained ;
 To needle, distaff, or Arachne's loom,
 To incline her haughty hand she never deigned ;
 Soft garments, too, and indoor life did spurn,
 For virtue still may dwell in camps. She armed
 With pride her countenance ; to make it stern
 Delighted her, and even stern, she charmed.

D

XL

While yet a girl, she with her baby hand
Now urged, now checked the ardour of her horse,
Handled with master skill both spear and brand,
And nerved her limbs by wrestling for the course ;
Then o'er the hills and woodlands wild pursued
The bear's and lion's track ; then in the van
Of battle flashed, where she, as in the wood,
To man a beast appeared, to beasts a man.

XLI

From Persia now she came, with all her power
The Christians to resist, though often she
Had strown their mangled limbs upon the shore,
And with their blood encarnadined the sea.
Now on arriving from that distant clime,
The apparatus seen for death decreed,
Wishing to examine and to know what crime
The guilty doomed, she presses on her steed.

XLII

The crowd falls back, while she her palfrey reins,
The fettered victims to examine close.
She sees her silent, and that he complains,
And that the weaker sex more courage shows.
She sees him weep, like one compassion tries—
Not sorrow—or if sorrow, not his own ;
While silent she to heaven so fixed her eyes,
That there her spirit seemed already flown.

XLIII

Clorinda, touched, their hapless fate condoles,
Nor can refrain from weeping, but appears
To feel for her more, who her grief controls ;
Her silence more affects her than his tears.
Nor waited longer, but turned swiftly round
To an old grey-haired man. 'Tell me,' she said,
'Who is this pair, and why together bound ?
Is't fate or crime that has them hither led ?'

XLIV

Thus questioned, and to her demand received
An answer brief that told the whole event.
Amazed she heard it, and at once believed
That each of them alike was innocent ;
And having purposed to avert their fate,
Far as her arms could force or prayers persuade,
Rushed forward, and with haste precipitate
Removed the flames, and to the attendants said :

XLV

' Let none of you that Aladine obey
Dare further in this hateful service stir
Until I speak with him ; for this delay,
Rest well assured, no blame you will incur.'
The officers obeyed the maiden's threat,
Awed by her princely and commanding air :
Then towards the king she hastened. Him she met
As he advanced to greet and honour her.

XLVI

' I am Clorinda,' she exclaimed. ' Perchance
To thee, O king, my name is not unknown.
Here have I come to guard with sword and lance
Our common faith, and thy imperilled crown.
Some task impose : 'gainst every toil I am steeled,
Nor fear the great, nor yet disdain the small,
Wilt thou I serve thee in the open field,
Or in the limits of the rampired wall.'

XLVII

She ceased, and thus the king : ' O maiden rare,
What land from Asia's so removed, what zone
So distant lies from the sun's cycle, where
Thy fame has not arrived, thy glory flown ?
If now thy sabre be with mine conjoined,
All fear departs and brighter prospects ope ;
Not if united armies had combined,
For my deliverance had I surer hope.

XLVIII

'Now, then, Prince Godfrey, it appears to me,
 Delays his march too long ; and dost thou ask
 Employment for thy arm ? None's worthy thee
 But the most difficult and daring task.
 I give thee rule over all grades, all ranks ;
 And that shall be the law thou dost ordain.'
 Thus spake, and she returned him courteous thanks
 For his eulogium, and resumed again :

XLIX

'Tho' it for certain were great novelty
 That recompense should services precede,
 Still I feel sure thou'lt grant this pair to me,
 For future services as present meed.
 Nay, if there's any doubt of their offence,
 Most harsh the law to inflict such punishment ;
 This I pass over, and the evidence
 From which I judge they both are innocent ;

L

'And will but add that the opinion here
 Is that the Christians did the image take,
 In this from you I differ, nor appear
 Without good cause this utterance to make ;
 That was irreverence of our laws which ye,
 Urged by Ismeno, deemed had power to save :
 Since in our temples 'twas not fitting we
 Should idols, least of all another's, have.

LI

'Wherefore I rather think the Prophet might
 Have wrought this miracle to demonstrate
 That his immaculate temples 'twas not right
 With new religion to contaminate.
 Let then Ismeno weave his mystic rites,
 He to whom witchcraft stands in place of arms :
 But let us draw the sword like gallant knights,
 These be our hopes, our arts, our magic charms.'

LII

She ceased. The king, although his iron breast
But seldom bent or was by pity swayed,
Yet fain would yield assent to her request.
Her reasons move him, and her prayers persuade :
' Let this be grace or justice which I give,
To such a pleader I can nought deny ;
Guiltless I free them, guilty I forgive.
Let them have life,' he said, 'and liberty.'

LIII

Thus were they loosed. Olindo's fate how blest
By such an act his earnestness to prove !
Since in her generous sympathetic breast
Love had at length awakened mutual love.
Erst lover, now beloved, the criminal goes
From pyre to marriage, while the blushing bride
Won by his sacrifice no shyness shows
To live with him who for her sake had died.

LIV

But the suspicious king would not consent
To have them near, in whom such virtues shine ;
Whence, as he willed, both into exile went,
Beyond the boundaries of Palestine ;
And following up his most inhuman plan,
Some of the Faithful banished, some confined.
Ah, with what heavy hearts they heard his ban,
And left their sons, their sires, their wives behind !

LV

Cruel division ! He drove out alone
Those of strong minds, and those robust in limb ;
But the soft sex, and those not fully grown,
In pledge retained as hostages with him.
Many turned rovers, rebels some ; his threat
Made anger triumph o'er their terror. Thus
They joined the Christian army, which they met
The day on which it entered Emmaus.

LVI

A city Emmaus is, that a short way
 From royal Salem separates, and one
 Who journeys slowly for his pleasure may,
 By starting early, Salem reach at noon.
 Oh, how this hearing doth the Christians cheer !
 Oh, how their zeal it quickens and foment !
 But since the sun was fast declining, here
 The captain orders them to pitch their tents.

LVII

They were already pitched, and the sun's light
 Was not far distant from the ocean's breast,
 When, lo ! two mighty barons loomed in sight,
 Of foreign port, and in strange costume dressed ;
 Their every act and peaceful bearing showed,
 They came as friends, perhaps some news to bring ;
 Escorted by a numerous train they rode,
 And were the envoys of the Egyptian king.

LVIII

Alethes one, who from most low estate,
 Ev'n from the refuse of the people sprung,
 Had reached the highest honours of the state,
 By subtle, eloquent, obsequious tongue.
 In manner pliant, versatile in wit,
 Prompt to dissemble, to deception used ;
 Slanders he forged, but still so apposite,
 That when they seemed to praise, they most accused.

LIX

Arganté, from Circassia, the other. He
 To Egypt came a stranger, and was made
 One of the satraps of the monarchy,
 And in the army reached the highest grade.
 Intolerant, inexorable, fierce,
 In arms unmatched, unwearied ; he adored
 No god, but scorned, and was to all averse,
 Owing no law, no reason, but his sword.

LX

They craved an audience, and admitted were
To Godfrey's presence. That illustrious knight
They found reposing on a lowly chair
Among his dukes, in simple garb bedight.
But real worth, though carelessly arrayed,
Is to itself its own bright ornament.
Small sign of honour him Arganté paid,
Like one too grand and too indifferent.

LXI

But on his breast Alethes placed his hand,
Bowed down his head, and bent on earth his eyes,
And, in the fashion of his native land,
His deep respect and reverence testifies.
He then began, and from his lips outsprung
In honeyed streams of eloquence a flood ;
And as the Franks had learned the Syrian tongue,
That which he said was fully understood.

LXII

' O worthy only thou, that this famed band
Of heroes deign obedience unto thee ;
Who through thy counsel and thy powerful hand,
Have kingdoms gained in many a victory ;
Ev'n that which scorned Alcides' bounds, thy name,
Has to our distant territory sped,
And in all parts of Egypt's realm has Fame
Most brilliant tidings of thy valour spread.

LXIII

' Nor 'mid so many of us is there one
Hears it, but as he greatest wonders might ;
But my king hears thy exploits not alone
With deep amazement, but extreme delight ;
Well pleased he is thy prowess to record,
Praising in thee what were to others cause
Of envious fear ; and of his own accord
A league now seeks of love, if not of laws.

LXIV

‘ Urged then by such praiseworthy motives, he
 Demandeth peace and friendship on thy side,
 And if faith cannot, then let valour be
 The means by which ye may become allied.
 But having heard that thou hadst armed, to drive
 From his dominions Aladine, his friend,
 He wished, ere further evils should arrive,
 His mind to thee through us, his envoys, send.

LXV

‘ His mind is this : That thou contented rest
 With what thou hast gained already in the war ;
 Nor Judah, nor the other parts molest,
 That by his sovran grace protected are :
 He, on the other hand, will guarantee
 Thy own not firm position : if ye two
 Should in alliance thus united be,
 What can the Turk or Persian hope to do ?

LXVI

‘ Important things in a short space thou hast done,
 Which time can never in oblivion hide ;
 Razed rampired cities, famous battles won,
 Surmounted hardships, unknown tracks defied.
 So that or frightened or confounded, sire,
 At the mere news, those far and near remain ;
 And though thou mayst new provinces acquire,
 To acquire fresh glory thou must hope in vain.

LXVII

‘ Thy fame has reached its zenith, and 'twere right
 That thou henceforth all dubious wars forswore ;
 If conqueror, conquest would increase thy might,
 But could not, sire, increase thy glory more :
 But should reverses happen, thou wouldst lose
 Honour, to mention not each captured state ;
 And he is mad at Fortune's game who throws
 Sure stakes 'gainst doubtful, against small ones great.

LXVIII

'But the advice of one who, perhaps, grieves
That others keep for long what they have gained,
In each emprise to have won fresh laurel leaves,
And that innate desire which is ingrained,
And glows most strongly in the strongest core,
To have kings subjected, provinces o'errun,
Will make thee peace avoid, it may be, more
Than others would war's deadliest perils shun.

LXIX

'Thee such will urge to follow to its close
That path now largely opened by the Fates,
And ne'er that celebrated sword depose,
Upon whose valour certain victory waits,
Until a desert Asia's made by thee,
And Mahmoud's crescent sinks before the Cross.
Delusions sweet : still, pleasant though they be,
They often end in most disastrous loss.

LXX

'But should blind passion not obscure thine eyes,
And cause the light of Truth to disappear,
Thou'lt find in any future enterprise
No cause at all for hope, but much for fear ;
Since Fortune changes—clouded now, now bright—
Varying by turns ; and they who madly soar
In too ambitious and too high a flight,
Are apt to haste their ruinous downfall more.

LXXI

'To move 'gainst thee if Egypt once begun,
Powerful in council, arms, and riches ; or
Should it e'er happen that Cassano's son,
With Turks and Persians leagued, renewed the war ;
What force against their fury canst thou bring,
Or where asylum for thyself provide ?
Thou trust'st perhaps the wicked Grecian king,
Who is to thee by sacred bonds allied ?

LXXII

' But who in Grecian faith would credence place ?
 From one sole treachery thou may'st gather all ;
 Nay, from a thousand : since that faithless race
 A thousand schemes has plotted for thy fall.
 Think'st thou that he for thee will risk his life—
 He who with arms thy host's advance withstood ?
 Will he who barred the roads—which ere the strife
 Were free to all—present thee with his blood ?

LXXIII

' But all thy hopes thou hast, it may be, set
 On these brave squadrons that environ thee,
 And think'st perhaps o'er foes combined to get,
 As when detached, as easy victory,
 Although thy ranks much thinned and weakened are
 By hardships and by fighting, as thou know'st ;
 Though a new foe has swoln the tide of war,
 And Egypt joined the Turk and Persian host.

LXXIV

' Still granting that it be thy destiny
 Ne'er to be conquered by the hostile sword ;
 And granting too that such is Heaven's decree
 As thou presumest it,—still, mighty lord,
 Famine will conquer thee : against that ill
 What refuge, what protection wilt thou find ?
 'Gainst her gaunt form thy broad sword wave, and still
 Thy eager hopes with fancied victory blind.

LXXV

' But know, the provident inhabitants
 With sword and fire have laid the country waste,
 And many days before thy host's advance
 In walls impregnable the harvest placed.
 Whence, then, dost hope thy horse and foot to feed,
 Thou who hast never to this hour repined ?
 Thou'lt say, our ships will give us help in need ;
 Depends then thy subsistence on the wind ?

LXXVI

' Perhaps thy fortune may the winds command,
And at thy pleasure rouse or keep them still?
The sea, though deaf to others' prayers, trampled
By Godfrey's voice, may bow to Godfrey's will?
Cannot our ships, then, on the ocean meet,
And with the Persians and the Turks combine,
And form in one so powerful a fleet
As well may match that armament of thine?

LXXVII

' Thou'lt need, O prince! a double victory,
Success in this emprise to consummate;
One sole disaster would occasion thee
Disgrace profound, and losses still more great:
Since, should our fleet a signal victory gain,
And rout thine own, thy camp would famished be;
And should'st thou lose on land, thy ships in vain,—
In vain would ride triumphant o'er the sea.

LXXVIII

' Now if in such condition you refuse
Peace and alliance with our sovran lord
(Pardon the truth), but thy mistaken views
Ill with thy other excellence accord.
But would to Heaven thou would'st thy sabre sheathe,
And change thy mind, that all may changed be;
That Asia may, her troubles over, breathe,
And thou enjoy the fruits of victory.

LXXIX

' And ye, who in each strange vicissitude
Of fame and peril his companions are,
Let not the smiles of Fortune so delude
As to induce you to provoke fresh war;
But like the sailors, who from treacherous gales
Bring back their vessels to the welcome shore,
Ye should collect your widely scattered sails,
Nor tempt the dangers of the ocean more.'

LXXX

Here ceased Alethes, and those valiant knights
 Followed with muttered murmuring his speech,
 And by their scornful attitudes and slights
 Showed how his overtures offended each.
 Thrice—aye, four times—the captain turned his eye,
 To see how his bold dukes the message took ;
 Then upon him who waited his reply
 Fixed his full glance, and thus unruffled spoke :

LXXXI

‘ Thou hast delivered in most sweet-toned phrase
 A message—friendly now, now menacing :
 If thy liege love me, and my actions praise,
 Pleased I accept the approval of the king ;
 But to that part where thou denouncest war
 To us from Pagandom’s united swords,
 I will reply as wont, ambassador,
 Clothing frank sentiments in simple words.

LXXXII

‘ Know that so much we have till now endured
 By land and sea, in light and darkness all—
 But that we might have our great end assured,
 And win our way to Salem’s sacred wall,
 And thus in God’s rewards participate,
 His flock releasing from the oppressor’s hand ;
 Nor do we deem it hard, for end so great
 To risk our worldly honour, life, and land.

LXXXIII

‘ Since no ambitious or unworthy love
 Did us to this great enterprise impel ;
 May from our breasts the God of heaven remove
 A plague so foul, if such in any dwell,
 Nor suffer that it moisten or infect
 Us with its poison, which, in pleasing, kills ;
 But ’tis His hand which gently doth correct
 Hard hearts, and in them tenderness instills.

LXXXIV

' This has impelled us, this has led us here ;
 Relieved us from all danger and delay ;
 This makes floods dry, this mountains disappear ;
 Takes summer's heat and winter's frost away ;
 Holds fast or loosens this the blustering squalls ;
 Appeases this the billows of the main ;
 Hence burned and breached are the most lofty walls,
 Hence armèd legions scattered are and slain.

LXXXV

' Hence courage takes its birth, and hope we greet,
 Not from our forces, fragile and fatigued ;
 Not from Frank arms, not from the friendly fleet,
 Not from the Greeks, if altogether leagued.
 So long as God his ægis arm extends,
 Though all else fail us, we are not dismayed ;
 Who knows both how it strikes and how defends,
 In danger's hour requires no other aid.

LXXXVI

' But should our sins or secret judgment doom
 Us to the want of His almighty aid,
 Which of us would not die to have his tomb
 Where his Redeemer's hallowed limbs were laid ?
 Then die we will, nor envy those that live ;
 Then die we will, nor unrevengèd die ;
 Nor at our fate her smiles will Asia give,
 Nor will our death extract from us one sigh.

LXXXVII

' Yet think not we a state of peace refuse,
 As one avoids or fears a mortal fight,
 Or that we wish thy liege's love to lose,
 Or that alliance with his arms we slight.
 But about Judah why so careful ? lies
 It subject to his rule ? Let him then cease
 To thwart us further in our enterprise,
 And his own subjects rule in tranquil peace.'

LXXXVIII

Stung was Arganté to the very core
 At Godfrey's answer ; nor could longer hide
 His rampant fury, but advanced before
 The captain, and with tumid lips replied :
 ' Who wills not peace shall have his glut of war ;
 There lack not causes to unsheathe the sword.
 All thoughts of peace thou must indeed abhor,
 To slight the terms now offered by our lord.'

LXXXIX

Then took his mantle by the skirt, and made
 With it an urn, which he held forth and burst
 Into still greater fury, and inveighed
 In tones still more despiteful than at first :
 ' Thou who success wouldst hazard on a die,
 Lo, War and Peace within this urn I bear.
 Thine the selection be—quick, quick reply !
 Take which thou wilt, and further parley spare.'

XC

His taunting attitude and words moved all
 To shout for ' War ' with simultaneous cry.
 They paused not even for their general,
 The chivalrous Prince Godfrey, to reply.
 Unfolding then the urn, he shook his cloak :
 ' To mortal war I challenge you,' he cried,
 And with such fierce and impious gesture spoke,
 That Janus' portals seemed to open wide.

XCI

It seemed he poured forth from the fatal urn
 Fierce Discord and mad Fury on the land,
 And seemed in his malignant eyes to burn
 Alecto's and Megæra's flaming brand.
 Such looked that mighty one, who to the skies
 Erected Error's giant pile, and even
 So Babel saw his proud defiant eyes
 Menace with scornful look the unheeding Heaven.

XCII

Then Godfrey added : ' To your king repair
With this my answer, that he come ; meanwhile
Accepted is the war which ye declare,
And should he fail, to expect us at the Nile.'
He then dismissed them in most courteous guise,
And honoured them with gifts of choice display :
To Alethes gave a helmet—a rich prize,
Seized at Nicea with the other prey.

XCIII

A sword upon Arganté he bestowed,
Whose hilt with gold and jewels was embossed ;
And tho' with lavish brilliancy it glowed,
Its value in the workmanship was lost.
But when he had examined narrowly
How rich the sheath was, and the blade how fine,
He said to Godfrey : ' Thou wilt shortly see
How I will use this precious gift of thine.'

XCIV

He then took leave, and to his comrade—' Now
Let us set off at once, our mission done,
I towards Jerusalem, towards Egypt thou ;
I at eve's close, and thou at rise of sun.
No need there is of me or of my art,
Where thou returnest to spread war's alarms ;
Bear thou the answer then : I'll not depart
When honour, trumpet-tongued, invites to arms.'

XCV

Arrived ambassador, he leaves as foe.
Was it a timely or untimely haste
That had offended ancient use, or no ?
He recks not, nor a single thought doth waste,
Nor heeds reply ; but, chafing at delay,
By friendly silence of the stars proceeds
To the high ramparts ; while no less their stay
Ill borne impatience in the army breeds.

XCVI

'Tis night ! The winds are hushed, the waters still,
And the mute world is wrapped in death-like sleep ;
The wearied animals—the fish that fill
Clear lakes, or tenant the unfathomed deep ;
The beasts concealed in fold or crouched in lair,
The painted songsters in oblivion gay,
'Neath the deep horrors of the lightless air
Appease their hearts, and dream their cares away.

XCVII

But not the pious chief nor faithful camp
Gives way to sleep, or for a moment rests ;
To see the welcome dawn relume her lamp
Creates such longing in their eager breasts
That their approach it might illumined make
To Salem's walls, the goal of their Crusade :
They watch each moment for one ray to break
And pierce the gloom of night's invidious shade.

CANTO III.

I

ALREADY was awake the herald air
To announce that fair Aurora 'gan to rise,
Who decked herself and wreathed her golden hair
With fresh-blown roses culled in Paradise ;
When from the camp, ere yet reveillée rung,
There rose a murmur from the deep-toned throats
Of arming thousands. The shrill trumpet's tongue
Then pealed forth livelier and more tuneful notes.

II

The wise commander with paternal care,
Directs their bent and regulates their force ;
Since much more easy near Charybdis 'twere
To turn the rolling billows from their course,
Or Boreas check when down the Apennines
It sweeps, engulfing vessels in the sea.
He orders, starts, by trumpet rules the lines
Rapidly—still by rule, though rapidly.

III

Winged are their eager hearts and winged their feet ;
Unconscious of their speed, on, on, they fly.
But when the ascending sun with fervent heat
Had struck the arid plains and risen on high,
Lo ! fair Jerusalem appears in sight,
Lo ! countless fingers point there, and exclaim
Ten thousand voices that in one unite,
' Hail ! Hail ! Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! '

E

IV

Thus, when a crew of hardy mariners
 Lured by the hope of new discovery, finds
 Upon uncertain seas, 'neath unknown stars,
 Fallacious waters and deceptive winds,
 If they at length behold the wished-for land
 Afar salute it with exultant cries ;
 Each points it out to each with eager hand,
 Forgetting his past toils and miseries.

V

To the great pleasure which that first fond look
 Of Salem's walls excited in each breast,
 Succeeded deep contrition that partook
 Of fear and reverence, by whose weight oppressed
 They scarcely dared lift up their longing gaze
 To where Christ chose to fix His earthly reign,
 There where He died, and where He buried was,
 And where triumphantly He rose again.

VI

The mute appeal, the supplicating voice,
 The broken sobs, the plaintive wailing sighs
 Of those still grieving ev'n as they rejoice,
 Cause such a murmur through the air to rise
 As in dense forests strikes the traveller's ear,
 When through its leaves the blasts of autumn pour ;
 Or as when dashed upon the rocks we hear
 With hollow boom the broken billows roar.

VII

Barefoot the soldiers tread the hallowed path,
 Each by his captain's meek example led ;
 His silken scarf and haughty crest each hath
 Straightway removed from his now humbled head,
 And with it cast aside his heart's proud dress,
 While warm repentant tears his eyes suffuse.
 Yet as if such could not his grief express,
 Each thus repining doth himself accuse :

VIII

'What! where Thou didst, O Lord! bedew the earth,
With countless bloody rivers, may not I
At least two living rivulets pour forth
Of bitter drops in such sad memory?
Art made of ice, my heart, as not to leak
Distilled in tears through these mine eyes? Art thou
So made of stone as not dissolve and break?
Thou 'dst aye deserve to weep, if tearless now.'

IX

Meanwhile the watch that from a tower descries
The mountains and the plain, beheld down there
The circling dust in such dense volumes rise,
That a cloud seemed imprinted in the air:
It seemed to flash with lurid light and blaze,
As pregnant with fierce flames and lightning's force
Now marked the sheen of steel's refulgent rays,
And now distinguished even man and horse.

X

Doubting no more, he raised the loud alarm:
'What dust I see, and how it seems to shine!
Up, up, O citizens! arm, quickly arm!
And for defence the embattled ramparts line,
The foe's already here:' and then more loud,
'Haste to your arms! arise, I say arise!
Behold the enemy, he's here; yon cloud
Of lurid dust behold that veils the skies.'

XI

Unarmed old age, and simple innocence,
The crowd of women smitten with despair,
Unfitted for attack or for defence,
Mournful and suppliant to the mosques repair.
The rest, who on stout hearts and hands depend,
Snatch up their trusty arms; some man the wall,
Others rush off the portals to defend;
The king goes round, provides, and sees to all.

XII

He gave his orders quickly and withdrew,
 Where 'twixt two gates a turret soars on high, (2)
 So that in need he's near, and whence the view
 Of each high land seems lower to the eye.
 Thither he bade Erminia to repair,
 Lovely Erminia whom his court received
 When the Frank troops had captured Antioch, where
 She was of her dear sire, the king, bereaved.

XIII

Clorinda then spurred forth to meet the Franks, (3)
 Many went with her, but she led them all,
 While at the sally-port Arganté ranks
 His troops for rescue, should she backward fall :
 Nor failed the fair her followers to incite
 By her bold words and bearing for the fray.
 'By good beginnings,' she exclaimed, 'tis right
 That we found Asia's future hopes to-day.'

XIV

Even as she spoke, not distant far was seen
 A troop of Franks removing rustic prey.
 They, as their wont, a-foraging had been,
 And with their spoil now campwards bent their way.
 She against them, and in a fatal hour
 'Gainst her advanced their chief, who marked her
 course—
 Gardo by name, a soldier of great power,
 But yet not one that could resist her force.

XV

By that fierce shock Gardo was hurled afar
 Upon the earth, 'neath Franks' and Pagans' eyes ;
 At which the latter shout, and of the war
 Infer propitious but false auguries ;
 Then spurring on, she closed in with the rest.
 Equal to hundreds her sole arm appeared,
 While her bold followers through the passage pressed,
 Which her fierce charge had oped, and broad sword
 cleared.

XVI

Soon from the spoiler is redeemed the spoil,
 And slow fell back the Franks until they found
 A hill on which they rallied for a while,
 Being there supported by the rising ground.
 Then as a whirlwind is unloosed, or falls
 A thunderbolt from the offended skies,
 The gallant Tancred, to whom Godfrey calls,
 Couches his lance and to the rescue flies ;

XVII

And bears so firmly its great weight, and seems,
 Though young, so brave and graceful in the fight,
 That, watching from on high, the tyrant deems
 Amid the choicest he's a chosen knight.
 Whence to the maiden at his side he cries
 (Whose breast already did strong tremors feel),
 'From such long habit thou must recognise
 Each Christian knight, although encased in steel ;

XVIII

'Who then is he who doth the rest eclipse
 In graceful port, and doth so fierce appear ?'
 Mute was Erminia's tongue, but to her lips
 Sprang a soft sigh, and to her lids a tear :
 Though checking somewhat both her tears and sighs,
 She still perceptible emotion shows,
 Since a red circle stained her pregnant eyes,
 And a deep sigh but half suppressed arose.

XIX

Then answered, but equivocating was,
 And other passion hid 'neath hate's disguise :
 'Ah me ! I know him well, and have good cause
 Amid a thousand him to recognise,
 Since I have often seen him strew the ground
 And fill the trenches with my people's gore.
 Ah me ! how cruel are his blows ; the wound
 He gives, no herb, no magic can restore.

XX

'Tancredi is his name. Ah would he were
 My captive once ! I do not wish him dead ;
 I want him living, that my fierce desire
 By sweet revenge might be alleviated.'
 While speaking thus, the truth her language shaped,
 A different meaning to the king expressed ;
 And, mingling with her closing words, escaped
 A deep-drawn sigh which vainly she repressed.

XXI

Clorinda, meanwhile, with her lance in rest,
 Dashed forth to meet Tancredi. As they closed,
 Each struck the other fiercely on the crest,
 And by the shock she was in part exposed,
 Since rent her helmet's straps ; from off her head
 It with a bound (oh, wondrous stroke) did fall,
 And as the breeze her golden locks outspread,
 A youthful damsel she appeared to all.

XXII

Then flashed her eyes, and shone her lightning glance ;
 Sweet even in wrath, what were it an she smiled ?
 What think'st of, Tancred ? That fair countenance
 Forgettest thou, that so thy heart beguiled ?
 This is the face that burned thee to the core,
 As it—since there its image lives—can tell ;
 This same is she whom thou beheld'st of yore
 Her brow refreshing at the lonely well.

XXIII

He who at first had not remarked her crest
 And blazoned shield, stood petrified, while she,
 Covering her head as best she could, still pressed
 The fierce assault ; and back retreated he,
 And against others whirled his cruel brand,
 Yet not the more obtained her grace. She cried,
 Him following with loud menace, 'Turn and stand,'
 And to a double death her foe defied.

XXIV

Though struck the knight, he striketh not, nor seeks
 So much his personal safety from the foe
 As to behold her lovely eyes and cheeks,
 Whence Cupid bends his unavoidable bow ;
 And to himself : ' Void are at times the blows
 That her armed hand delivers, but each dart
 Launched from her fair and unarmed features goes
 Straight to its goal, and penetrates my heart.'

XXV

Of pity hopeless, he resolved at length
 To tell his passion, nor in silence die,
 And let her know she threw away her strength
 On one already in captivity ;
 Whence, ' Cruel maid, that seem'st to have,' he cried,
 ' Me for thy foe alone of all these swarms,
 Retire we from this turmoil, and aside
 In mortal strife make trial of our arms :

XXVI

' Then will be seen if my strength equals thine.'
 To his request Clorinda gave assent,
 Nor at the loss of helmet did repine,
 But boldly she, while he disheartened, went.
 Prepared for battle stood the martial maid,
 And had already struck the enamoured knight,
 When ' Hold, and let us make,' Tancredi said,
 ' In the first place conditions for the fight.'

XXVII

She stayed her arm ; his love in its despair
 Did a new courage to the knight impart.
 ' Since,' he exclaimed, ' all peace thou dost forswear,
 The terms shall be that thou pluck out my heart.
 My heart, no more mine own, if not thy will
 That it should live, a willing victim dies ;
 'Tis thine long since, nor is the moment ill
 For thee to consummate its sacrifice.

XXVIII

'Lo, I cast down my hands and thee present
My breast without defence : why strike not there ?
Or shall I ease the task, I am content
To doff my breastplate and my bosom bare.'
Then wretched Tancred in more sad laments
Had told perhaps the story of his woe,
But him the arrival, most ill-timed, prevents,
Of his own troops, and of the Pagan foe.

XXIX

Charged by the Christian host the Syrians yield ;
Was it from fear or stratagem designed ?
When a barbarian scouring o'er the field
Saw her loose tresses dangling in the wind ;
And, passing in the rear, upraised his arm
To strike in that defenceless part the maid :
But Tancred, who observed it, gave the alarm,
And the great blow received upon his blade.

XXX

Yet went it not in vain, but struck her where
The lovely head springs from the snowy neck ;
Slight was the wound, still her gold-coloured hair
Some drops of blood with crimson patches fleck.
So flashes gold when with carbuncles set,
It sparkles from some skilful artist's hand.
The infuriate prince, with many a muttered threat,
Dashed at the wretch, and tighter grasped his brand.

XXXI

Away he fled ; burning with rage, the knight
Pursued. They flew like arrows through the air :
Perplexed she stands, and keeps both long in sight,
Yet deigns not follow the retreating pair,
But doth the fugitives accompany,
And now shows front and seeks the Franks in fight,
Now turns, returns, flies, makes the Christians fly,
Nor could one say if hers were chase or flight.

XXXII

Thus if the bull in spacious circus turn
 His threatening horns against pursuing hounds,
 They quick retreat, but should he fly, return,
 And each to follow with fresh ardour bounds.
 To guard her head, her shield Clorinda kept
 Over her shoulders, as she sought the walls :
 In Moorish games the players thus intercept,
 Thus balk the fury of the flying balls. (4)

XXXIII

Pursuing Frank and flying Infidel
 Had nearly reached the lofty ramparts, when
 The wily Pagans raised a horrid yell,
 And of a sudden drove them back again.
 A circuit wide they made, nor turned, until
 They in reverse could strike their rear and flanks ;
 Meantime, Arganté moved down from the hill,
 To charge in front their now surrounded ranks.

XXXIV

The fierce Circassian dashed forth with a bound ;
 Eager to give first blow he led the van,
 And him he struck he stretched upon the ground,
 And in one heap rolled over horse and man ;
 And ere his lance in shivers flew, had sent
 Many to bear him company ; nor ceased,
 But drew his sabre, which, when home it went,
 Aye slew, struck down, or caused some wound at least.

XXXV

Clorinda, jealous of his glory, slew
 The strong Ardelio, who of years mature
 Was still untamed by age. With him were two
 Great sons : yet even he was not secure,
 Since a bad wound had from his father's care
 Removed Alcander ; and 'twas all that brave
 Young Polypherne could do, who still stood near
 (So closely pressed he was), himself to save.

XXXVI

But Tancred, finding that he could not gain
 That villain mounted on a fleeter horse,
 Looked back, and saw too far upon the plain
 His gallant troop had urged their daring course :
 Saw them surrounded. Quickly turning rein,
 He pricked his steed, and galloped straightway there,
 Nor did his arm alone his friends sustain :
 Down came those ready for all risks : they were

XXXVII

Dudoné's squadron of Adventurers,
 Flower of the camp, its sinew, and its force ;
 Noblest and fairest, young Rinaldo spurs
 Before them all, like lightning on his course.
 Erminia quickly knew his cognisance,
 The eagle argent on the azure field,
 And to the king, who marked his bold advance :
 ' Behold the brave, to whom the bravest yield.

XXXVIII

' As cavalier, he but few equals knows,
 Or none at all, and though a stripling still,
 Were there six other such amid thy foes,
 All Syria now were subject to their will :
 The realms most southward had already been
 Subdued, aye, all the orient by their force ;
 And perhaps the Nile had from their power in vain
 Concealed his distant and mysterious source.

XXXIX

' His name's Rinaldo ; the strong ramparts fear
 His angered arm more than a huge machine.
 Now turn thine eyes : behold yon cavalier,
 Emblazed whose armour is with gold and green ;
 That is Dudoné, by whose arm is led
 This very squadron of Adventurers ;
 Of lofty lineage and experienced head,
 He most in worth transcends, and all in years.

XL

'Seest thou that giant cased in brown? he is
Gernando, brother of great Norway's king;
The world hath not a prouder soul, and this
Alone a shade o'er his deserts doth fling.
There are the two for ever joined in one,
Whose arms and every ornament are white:
Gildippé, Edward, who renown have won
As no less leal in love than staunch in fight.'

XLI

Meanwhile they saw beneath, as thus she spoke,
How more and more the combat thickened; when
Through the ring Tancred and Rinaldo broke,
Though bristling it with flashing arms and men.
Dudoné's squadron then came thundering on,
Cutting and thrusting, when before their eyes
Arganté's self, Arganté is struck down
By young Rinaldo, and can scarcely rise.

XLII

Nor had he risen, but at that moment sank
Rinaldo's gallant charger in the fray,
His foot remaining 'neath the horse's flank,
And struggling he to drag it thence away.
Meanwhile, the routed Saracens repair
To the town's shelter, flying like the wind;
Alone, Arganté and Clorinda were
A mound and trench against the storm behind.

XLIII

They were the last to bear the battle's brunt,
And stem the torrent surging in their rear,
Which made it easy for all those in front,
To escape the Christians that still followed near.
Dudoné, flushed with victory, overthrew
Tigranes by a charge of his bold horse;
His sabre then the veteran soldier drew,
And on the greensward stretched the headless corse.

XLIV

What now avails thy corslet, Algazar?
 Corbano, what thy helmet's steel-bound crest?
 Since through your nape and back he pierced so far,
 That the point issued at the face and breast.
 His arm expelled then from their sweet abode
 The souls of Amurath and Mahomet;
 Almansor's too; nor e'en Arganté could
 Securely stir, so close was he beset.

XLV

With frantic rage the great Circassian burned,
 Now stopped, faced round, still yielded to the Frank.
 At length so suddenly on him he turned,
 And caught him with such fury on the flank,
 That his sword's point therein was buried deep,
 And by the blow the Christian leader slain.
 He falls: unwelcome rest and iron sleep
 Weigh down those lids that scarce can ope again.

XLVI

Yet thrice he oped them, and heaven's pleasant light
 Sought to enjoy; and thrice his body raised
 Upon his arm, thrice fell. The shades of night
 In death at last his languid eyeballs glazed;
 His limbs relax, a mortal icy chill
 Stiffens and bathes them in a dank cold sweat.
 Arganté paused not o'er the corse, but still
 Pushed on ahead with undiminished whet.

XLVII

With that, although he ceased not to give way,
 Turned to the Franks he cried, 'This blood-stained
 sword,
 Is the same precious gift that yesterday
 Was to myself presented by your lord;
 Tell him how I to-day have used it. He
 Such welcome news most willingly will hear;
 Nay, should rejoice that its great value be
 Established by probation so severe.

XLVIII

'Tell him its point he may expect to see
 In his own bowels, as a proof more sure ;
 And should he haste not his attack on me,
 I will the means to find him out procure.'
 The Franks, incensed at his insulting speech,
 Rushed to cut down the braggart, but with all
 The rest he fled beyond the Christians' reach,
 'Neath the safe shelter of the friendly wall.

XLIX

Its stout defenders then to hail began
 Such showers of stones on their advancing foes,
 And countless quivers in each barbican
 Supplied such flights of arrows to their bows,
 That the Frank troops compelled were to recede,
 And let the Pagans gain the sheltering town,
 When, his foot having from his fallen horse freed,
 Rinaldo in hot haste came thundering down.

L

He sought dire vengeance 'gainst the homicide
 Who had so brutally Dudoné slain,
 And having reached his squadron, proudly cried,
 'What wait ye for? Why thus inert remain?
 Since dead is he who was our leader—why
 Not hasten forward to avenge his fall?
 What! with such cause for animosity,
 Blench at the barrier of a fragile wall?

LI

'Not, if yon wall impenetrable were,
 Of adamant or doubled iron made,
 Could fierce Arganté find protection there,
 Or there the vigour of your arms evade ;
 On to the assault—advance!' As thus he spoke,
 Before them all the youthful hero sprang ;
 His fearless forehead feared no hostile stroke,
 Though showers of stones and arrows round him rang.

LII

And tossing his haught head he raised his glance,
 With such portentous resolution filled,
 That even inside the walls the combatants
 Were to the heart by fright unwonted chilled.
 But while the slack he menaced, and fresh cheer
 Gave to the valiant, crippled were his hands,
 Since to him Godfrey sent the good Sigier,
 Grave rigid messenger of grave commands.

LIII

He in his name chid his excessive fire,
 And bade him his adventurous steps retrace.
 'Return,' he cried ; 'for this display of ire
 Ill-fitting is the season and the place.
 Thus Godfrey orders.' From the strong redoubt
 Rinaldo, who had spurred the rest, withdraws,
 Although he fumed within and showed without
 How disappointed at being balked he was.

LIV

The Franks retired, nor by the Pagan force
 Or menaced or disturbed was their retreat ;
 Nor was defrauded brave Dudoné's corse
 Of its last honours, but with reverence meet,
 On sympathising arms his faithful friends
 That precious and most honoured burden bore.
 Godfrey meanwhile an eminence ascends,
 The city's site and fences to explore.

LV

Upon two ridges of unequal height, (5)
 That front each other, stands Jerusalem,
 Through which there runs a narrow vale, whose site
 Divides the town in two, and severs them.
 Three sides a steep ascent the place defends,
 But on the fourth you go, nor seem to rise,
 And this plain side, which towards the north extends,
 By loftiest ramparts more defended is.

LVI

Inside, the town has cisterns to amass
The falling rain, and living springs and pools ;
Outside, the country round is bare of grass,
Nor fount nor stream the barren region cools ;
Nor trees are seen in all the neighbourhood
A screen 'gainst summer's heat to interpose,
Save where, beyond six miles, a gloomy wood
Horrent and dark its baleful shadow throws.

LVII

On that side whence the dawn's first splendours rise,
The blessed Jordan's noble waters roll ;
And to the west the sandy seaboard lies
Of the blue Mediterranean. Towards the pole
Samaria lies, and pillared Bethel, where
To the gold calf was raised the impious shrine ;
And where the south with vapour loads the air,
Stands Bethlehem, hallowed by the birth Divine.

LVIII

Now as Prince Godfrey scanned the country round,
The city's site, the lofty walls, and thought
Where for his army was best camping ground,
And the easiest spot to storm the ramparts sought,
Erminia saw, and to the tyrant spoke,
Him clearly pointing with her finger : ' There,
That Godfrey is, who in the purple cloak
Has such a royal and majestic air.

LIX

' He looks indeed one born to hold command,
And as a ruler is without compeer,
Of equal merit is his head and hand,
As captain perfect and as cavalier ;
Nor 'mid yon host a more consummate knight
Or sager counsellor than he is known.
Rinaldo and Tancredi in the fight,
In council, Raymond, equal him alone.'

LX

'Him,' the king answered, 'I remember well,
 And once beheld at the great court of France
 When there as Egypt's envoy, and can tell
 How nobly in the lists he bore his lance ;
 And though lush spring had scattered not the seeds
 Of down upon his cheek, still in his mien,
 In his staid language and heroic deeds,
 Promise, e'en then, of loftiest hopes was seen.

LXI

'Promise, alas ! too true.' His troubled eyes
 Here he cast down ; then raised them up and said,
 'Tell me who's he that with him almost vies,
 And wears his surcoat, too, of royal red ?
 Oh, what resemblance to the prince, though he
 Somewhat in stature to the captain cedes.'
 'That's Baldwin : truly in his looks you see
 He's brother, but much more so by his deeds.

LXII

'Now look at that stern cavalier who stays,
 As if adviser, on the captain's right,
 That Raymond is, to whom I gave such praise
 For prudence, now from age's silver white ;
 To weave war's stratagems none better knows,
 Or Frank or Latin. He still further on,
 With the gold casque upon his royal brows,
 Is William, the English king's accomplished son.

LXIII

'Close by stands Guelpho, his competitor
 In birth, in station, and in deeds of fame ;
 Well, well I know him by those shoulders square,
 And by the expansion of that bulky frame.
 But tho' amid yon squadrons I have tried,
 As yet I cannot my arch-foeman trace ;
 I mean Boëmondo—the red homicide—
 The fell destroyer of my royal race.'

LXIV

Thus these conversed : but when the country round
 Godfrey had scanned, he to his troops went down,
 And since he deemed where springs the steepest ground
 That it were useless to assault the town,
 He pitched his tents with true strategic skill
 'Gainst the north gate, upon the adjoining plain ;
 Thence ranged the others, which extended till
 The so-called Angle Tower the long lines gain. (6)

LXV

The camp embraced with its vast cirque of tents
 A third part of the town. For all around,
 So great Jerusalem's circumference,
 They were not able wholly to surround.
 But still to bar the roads Prince Godfrey tries,
 By which the foe might get external aid,
 And all the likely passes occupies
 That to and from the royal city led.

LXVI

Then orders them to fortify the tents
 With pallisades and deep-cut trenches. So
 Alike the townsmen's sallies he prevents,
 And checks incursions from marauding foe ;
 But when the works accomplished were, his course
 (Wishing to see the slaughtered chief) he bends
 To where surrounded lay Dudoné's corse
 By a sad concourse of lamenting friends.

LXVII

With noble pomp they, faithful, had adorned
 The imposing coffin, where sublime he lay.
 When Godfrey entered, the sad mourners mourned
 More sadly, and to greater grief gave way ;
 But his own feelings pious Godfrey reined.
 Not calm—and yet not troubled—was his look,
 In deep reflection silent he remained,
 As for awhile he gazed on him, then spoke :

F

LXVIII

' We should not weep for thee, lost friend, nor grieve,
 Who dead on earth, in heaven art born again ;
 Ev'n here, where thou thy mortal veil dost leave,
 Deep traces of thy glory still remain.
 As Christian soldier thou hast lived and died ;
 Go then, rejoice, and feed thy longing eyes,
 O happy soul, on God ; who will provide
 For thy good deeds on earth, His heavenly prize.

LXIX

' Live blessed thou : it is our hapless fate,
 Not thy ill-fortune, that draws forth our tears,
 Since in thy exit to a happier state,
 A very host of warriors disappears.
 But if what's commonly called Death, thee slain,
 Deprive our forces of terrestrial aid,
 Thou canst for us celestial aid obtain,
 Since one of God's elected angels made.

LXX

' And as we have seen that mortal arm of thine
 In our behalf wield mortal weapons, even
 So let us hope to see thee, shade divine,
 Employ for us the immortal arms of heaven.
 Hear and receive then the requests that we
 Now make, and grant us thy all-powerful aid.
 Procure our triumph, and our vows to thee,
 We victors, at the Temple shall be paid.'

LXXI

Thus spake ; already the last sunbeams were
 By night's Cimmerian shadows overspread ;
 And by oblivion of all carking care,
 Were tears and lamentations respited.
 But the anxious chief, who deemed he ne'er could storm
 Without some battering-rams the frowning keep,
 Thinks where to find the beams, and in what form
 Make the machines, and gets but little sleep ;

LXXII

And with the sun rose up, since he proposed
Following the corse to its last resting-place.
Of cypress was Dudoné's tomb composed,
Near the stockades and at a mountain's base,
And overshadowing it a lofty palm,
Its spreading boughs, the type of honour, flung.
Here was he laid, and here with many a psalm,
The priests a requiem to his spirit sung.

LXXIII

And here and there among its branches were
The various arms, his captive spoil, displayed,
In happier battles won by him—whilère
In Persian wars and Palestine crusade.
The trunk they covered in most martial guise
With his great corslet, and to note their loss
Beneath was written, 'Here Dudoné lies :
Honour the noblest champion of the Cross.'

LXXIV

But when the prince had left the ceremony,
So sad and sacred, for the imperial tent,
All the camp's workmen to the forest he
With a strong escort of picked soldiers sent.
It to the Franks a Syrian herd did show :
It lies concealed 'mid valleys deep and dense ;
Thither to hew the great machines they go,
'Gainst which the town can make but poor defence.

LXXV

With cheering cries they on each other call
To fell the trees, nor spare the wood's repose.
The mountain ash and sacred palm tree fall
Beneath the fury of their trenchant blows ;
Funereal cypress, the green-oak and pine,
The umbrageous holm-oak, lofty fir and beech,
The married elm, to which the fragile vine
Clings for support and fain the heavens would reach.

LXXVI

Some strike the yews, others the lordly oaks
That have a thousand times their leaves renewed,
And moveless stood against the thousand shocks
Of winter's blast, repelled them and subdued.
Of odorous ash and cedar some prepared
On creaking wheels the perfumed load to rest,
By crash of axe and other noises scared,
Beasts leave their den, and frightened birds their nest.

CANTO IV.

I

WHILE thus the Franks their warlike engines made,
To have them ready for their high emprise,
Man's mighty foe from Acheron's gloomy shade,
Against the Christians turned his livid eyes ;
And seeing them on their pious work intent,
Bit both his lips, with rankling fury stung ;
While like a wounded bull his rage found vent
In bellowing roars that through Gehenna rung.

II

Then having turned his every thought to bring
Upon the Christians ruin most complete,
His legions are commanded by their king
(Terrific council !) round his throne to meet,
As though a light emprise—insensate !—'twere
The Heavenly Will's fixed purpose to withstand.
Fool ! that would try to equal God, or dare
Forget the thunders of his angered hand !

III

The Stygian trump's discordant jangling blast
Through hell's eterne obscurity resounded ;
Shook the black caverns of the dreary vast,
And from its din the lightless air rebounded.
Such crashing peals Heaven never thundered forth,
When mortals threatening with its fiery doom ;
With greater violence ne'er quaked the earth,
Compressing vapours in her pregnant womb.

IV

Straightway the gods of hell in several swarms
 Rushed to the lofty gates from all around.
 Oh, what strange shapes they had—what horrid forms !
 What dread—what death in their gaunt eyeballs frowned !
 With cloven foot some print the burning soil,
 Whose human heads contorted snakes entwined ;
 And like a scourge in many a sinuous coil,
 Voluminous tails the hybrids drag behind.

V

Here countless filthy Harpies you might mark ;
 Centaurs by thousands ; Sphinxes, Gorgons pale ;
 Voracious Scyllas without number bark ;
 Huge Pythons hiss, and hideous Hydras wail.
 Dark lurid flames misshaped Chimæras pour ;
 Here Polyphemus stalks, there Geryon ;
 And monsters strange ne'er seen or known before,
 With looks diverse, confused, and blent in one.

VI

Some on the left side ; others of the band
 Stood on the right, hell's ruthless king before ;
 I' the centre sat grim Pluto, his right hand
 A ponderous mace, the sovran emblem, bore.
 No sea-girt rock, no cliff with head so reared,
 Not Calpé, no, nor Atlas, but had now,
 Compared with him, a little mound appeared,
 So towered aloft his mighty horns and brow.

VII

Horrific majesty increased the dread
 Of his fierce look, and did its pride enhance ;
 His eyes, infect with poison, were blood-red ;
 Like baleful comet shone his murderous glance.
 Matted and thick fell down his grisly beard,
 And o'er his breast in tangled masses flowed ;
 Like a deep gulf his cavern-jaws appeared,
 Beslubbered over with black, clotted blood.

VIII

Like Mongibello's suffocating smoke,
 Like to its stench and thunder you'd compare
 The fetid blasts, that in dense volumes broke
 From his foul throat ; alike the sparkles were.
 While speaking, Cerberus his bark allayed ;
 Mute was the Hydra at its lord's harangue ;
 The abysses shook—his course Cocytus stayed,
 As through all hell his thundering accents rang.

IX

' Tartarean gods ! more worthy far are ye
 Above the sun, where ye were born, to sit,
 Whom the great Fall hurled headlong down with me
 From happier regions to this gloomy pit.
 Other's old passions and suspicions are
 But too well known, not less our great emprise.
 Alas ! how changed. His will now rules each star,
 And we are deemed but rebels in His eyes.

X

' And in the place of day's unclouded bliss,
 Of circling stars, and the sun's golden fire,
 Here He has mewed us, in this dark abyss,
 Nor wills that we to our first rank aspire.
 Then (ah, how hard its memory is to bear !
 This is what doth the sharpest sting convey)
 He summoned man His blest abode to share,
 Man ! abject man ! vile earth-born child of clay !

XI

' Nor did that seem enough. His Son accurst
 He made Death's prey, to aggravate our loss,
 Who came, and through hell's fiery portals burst,
 And with bold foot our threshold dared to cross ;
 And thence dragged souls that were by right our share,
 And our rich prey replaced in heaven's retreat ;
 And in despite of us, in triumph there
 Displayed the flags that told of hell's defeat.

XII

‘ But why my grief by idle words renew ?
 Who of our wrongs is ignorant, and where
 Or when did He desist to injure you,
 Or from His wonted stratagems forbear ?
 Remembrance of the past we should not wake,
 When every thought our present sufferings claim ;
 For see ye not how He attempts to make
 All lands bow down in homage to His name ?

XIII

‘ Shall we then waste in sloth the days and hours,
 And in cold-blooded apathy remain ?
 What ! let in Asia these accursed Giaours,
 His faithful flock, still further laurels gain,
 Extend His honour, and exalt His praise ?
 Subject Judea, and His name make known ?
 Sound it in other tongues, in other lays,
 On bronzes write it, and incise in stone ?

XIV

‘ What ! see our cherished idols overthrown,
 And to His service our loved altars turned ?
 To Him suspended vows—to Him alone
 Offered up gold, and myrrh, and incense burned ?
 And where ’gainst us no temple closed its door,
 Shall none now open to our arts remain ?
 Shall souls, once ours, rich tribute pay no more,
 And in a desert kingdom Pluto reign ?

XV

‘ No, no, it shall not be, since that fierce zeal
 That fired of yore our spirits is not lost,
 With which, when girt with lambent flame and steel,
 We boldly fought against the heavenly host.
 Worsted by them we were, I can’t deny ;
 Still valour nobly our great scheme sustained,
 And though they then obtained the victory,
 With us the glory of the attempt remained.

XVI

'But why detain you, faithful comrades, more?
Away, my strength; my peerless force, away!
Go, crush these wicked fanatics, before
Still further stablished is their crescent sway.
And ere the kingdom of Judea burn,
Quench the fierce flames it threatening to consume;
Among them enter, and adopt in turn
Now force, now fraud, to speed their final doom.'

XVII

'Let what I will be Fate. Let some remove
Far from the camp; let some be slain, the while
That others, sunk in wanton cares of love,
Their idols make of a sweet glance and smile.
Against their rulers turn the traitorous steel
Of a divided and rebellious race;
Let the camp perish, nor one stone reveal
Of its once whereabouts the slightest trace.'

XVIII

To wait, those rebel spirits did not deign
Till brought were his instructions to an end;
But flying forth to see the stars again,
From the dark realms of endless night ascend,
Like raging storms resounding from afar,
When bursting from the caverns of their birth,
To cloud heaven's azure face, and carry war
O'er the vast regions of the sea and earth.

XIX

With vans expanded, through the various parts
Of the wide world they spread themselves, and straight
Began to use their old infernal arts,
And new and diverse frauds to fabricate;
But say, O Muse! how first with loss they smote
The Christian forces, and from whence it came.
Thou know'st it; but of deeds so far remote
Has scarcely reached us the faint breath of fame.

XX

Prince Idraotes, a famed wizard, reigned
 O'er proud Damascus and the cities near ;
 He from his early youth had knowledge gained
 Of magic, and now prized it more than e'er.
 But what availed it, could he not the end
 Of the great conflict, doubtful still, foretell ?
 Nor from the fixed or wandering stars portend
 The truth, nor yet from oracles of hell ?

XXI

He judged (ah, poor, short-sighted mind of man,
 How vain, how warped the judgments of thy breast !)
 That Heaven did ruin and destruction plan
 Against the unconquered army of the West ;
 But deeming in the end the Egyptians would
 The laurels of the enterprise obtain,
 He wished his people in the victory should
 As well the profit as the glory gain.

XXII

Still fearing that the war might bloody be,
 And to himself result in certain loss,
 He 'gan to think by what contrivance he
 Might shake the nascent influence of the Cross,
 So that the Egyptians with his troops combined
 With greater ease might triumph o'er the foe ;
 His evil genius came while in this mind
 He was, and spurred and urged him what to do.

XXIII

He counselled him, and ministered the ways
 That would the labour of the emprise decrease.
 A maid, to whom all Asia gave the praise
 Of greatest beauty, was the wizard's niece.
 The frauds most skilful and the arts most fine
 Of witch and woman she completely knew :
 Whence her he called, imparted his design,
 Which he entreated her to carry through.

XXIV

'Darling,' he said, 'who 'neath those locks of gold,
And 'neath an aspect of such gentleness,
Conceal'st a head so wise, a heart so bold,
And dost myself in my own art surpass,
Great schemes I meditate. Success will crown
Our warmest hopes, if in them thou'lt engage ;
Weave then the web whose subtle threads I have spun,
And dauntless execute the plans of age.

XXV

'Go to the hostile camp, and there employ
Each art of woman that to love allures.
Go, bathed in tears ; with sweets thy prayers alloy ;
With deep-drawn sighs confound thy overtures.
Let beauty, weeping and forlorn, not fail
To bend unyielding age and wilful youth ;
Excessive boldness with coy blushes veil,
And let thy falsehood wear the mask of truth.

XXVI

'Take, if thou canst, Prince Godfrey with the bait
Of thy sweet glances and refined address ;
So that, enthralled by love, he terminate
The war begun; and further strife repress.
If that can't be, the other chieftains lure ;
Coax them away, by thy soft ways trapped,
Ne'er to return.' Then gave details mature ;
Adding : 'All's lawful for our faith and land.'

XXVII

The fair Armida, of her beauty proud,
And of the gifts her sex and youth imparts,
Accepts the charge, and beneath twilight's shroud,
By the most lone and secret ways, departs ;
And, with her woman's robe and flowing hair,
Hopes to o'ercome an armed unconquered race ;
While of her flight a thousand rumours are
On purpose spread and scattered through the place.

XXVIII

Few days elapsed ere reached the damsel where
 Stood ranged in order the Crusaders' tents.
 At the appearance of such beauty rare
 A buzz arose ; all gazed in rapt suspense,
 As if in heaven, in the broad light of day,
 Resplendent shone a comet or a star ;
 And round her flocked the Christians to survey
 And learn the errand of the pilgrim fair.

XXIX

Not Argos, Delos, nor did Cyprus e'er
 Such model see of beauty or of mien ;
 Wimpled in snowy gauze, her golden hair
 Now flashes through, now all exposed is seen :
 So when the skies clear up, erst veiled in haze,
 Through fleecy clouds the sun transparent shines,
 Now bursting forth, still brighter beams displays,
 And in redoubled light the day enshrines.

XXX

Through her loose tresses, waved by Nature, steals
 (Crisping fresh curls therein) the sportive air ;
 Her glance, concentrated in itself, conceals
 Love's treasure and its own with miser care.
 In her fair cheek the damask of the rose
 With ivory's white diffuses and combines ;
 But her sweet lips—whence air, love-breathing, blows—
 The simple rose unmixed encarnadines.

XXXI

Her beauteous bosom flaunts its naked snow,
 Whence is awaked and fed Love's ardent fire ;
 Her breasts in part their budding beauty show,
 In part are hidden by her envious tire.
 Envious ! But if to sight it bars approach,
 It cannot check the amorous thoughts, which, not
 Content with mere external form, encroach
 And penetrate to the most secret spot.

XXXII

And as through water or clear glass a ray
 Passes entire, nor parts it nor divides,
So through the barrier robe thought makes its way,
 And to forbidden places boldly glides.
There spatiate freely, there the truth surveys
 Of each rare marvel separately; and thence
The lovely picture to desire displays,
 And with fresh fuel its fierce flame foment.

XXXIII

Admired and courted, through the love-smit files
 Armida passes, and perceives her power,
But shows it not, though in her heart she smiles,
 Designing thence rich spoil in victory's hour.
Meanwhile, perplexed somewhat, she sought a guide,
 To lead her to the captain of the host,
When youthful Eustace darted to her side,
 Brother of him who held that sovran post.

XXXIV

He to the splendour of her beauty flew,
 Attracted as gay butterfly to light,
And turned more closely those fair eyes to view,
 That drooped with decent shame before his sight;
Whence he inhaled and caught their fervid flame,
 As tinder does when near a glowing fire,
And to her said, since he now bold became
 From heat of youth and from intense desire :

XXXV

'Lady!—if such a name be not misplaced,
 Since thou resemblest nothing upon earth,
Nor is there one of Adam's daughters graced
 With such appearance of celestial birth—
Say what thou seek'st from us : whence com'st, and how?
 What brings thee here? Ah, tell me, I entreat,
Who, what thou art, that I in homage bow,
 Or, if it need, fall prostrate at thy feet !'

XXXVI

She answered him : ' Thy praises soar too high ;
 To such a height my merit hath not flown.
 A thing thou seest too truly mortal : I,
 To joy long dead, exist for grief alone.
 Into this camp by harsh misfortune thrust,
 An outcast maid, a stranger, I resort
 For help to pious Godfrey, whom I trust :
 Such is of his great goodness the report.

XXXVII

' Thither find means my errant steps to guide,
 If, as it seems, thou good and courteous art.'
 ' 'Tis right that to one brother,' he replied,
 ' Another leads thee, ay, and takes thy part.
 Relief, fair maid, thou seekest not in vain,
 Since that, at my request, he will afford ;
 Thou canst, as best it pleaseth thee, obtain
 The assistance of his sceptre or my sword.'

XXXVIII

He ceased, and led the blushing damsel where,
 Apart, Prince Godfrey with his dukes conferred.
 To him she bowed with meek respectful air,
 Yet uttered not, from bashfulness, a word ;
 But her the courteous paladin consoled,
 And so removed her diffidence and fears,
 That she at length her artful story told,
 In tones whose melody entranced all ears.

XXXIX

' Unconquered prince,' she said, ' whose glorious name
 Flies, pranked with ornaments so passing bright,
 That kings and provinces esteem it fame
 Defeat to suffer at thy hands in fight,
 Known is thy valour everywhere, and so
 Approved and valued is thy worth that we,
 Thy very foes, our blind reliance show
 By aid imploring, in our straits, from thee.

XL

' Thus I, though born in faith so opposite,
Which thou wouldst humble by exhaustive wars,
Hope to regain through thee, magnanimous knight,
The throne and sceptre of my ancestors ;
If others seek assistance from their own,
Themselves to rescue from the stranger's yoke,
I, since my kin have no compassion shown,
'Gainst my own blood thy hostile steel invoke.

XLI

' On thee I call and hope ; alone canst thou
Replace me on that height whence I was thrown ;
Nor shouldst thou be less prompt to raise the low,
Than from their seats to cast the mighty down ;
Nor prize the vaunt of tender pity's trait
Less than the brilliant triumphs thou hast won ;
And if, from many, realms thou hast taken away,
Win equal fame by now restoring one.

XLII

' But if our faith, so different, moveth thee
To slight, it may be, this my honest prayer,
Let my faith in thy pity plead for me ;
Nor right it seems, it disappointed were.
That God is witness, who is Jove to all,
A cause more just ne'er pleaded for thy aid.
But to know fully what did me befall,
Hear how I was by others' fraud betrayed :

XLIII

' Daughter I am of Arbilan, who reigned
O'er proud Damascus ; though less well-born, he
Fair Cariclea for his wife obtained,
Who made him heir of that great monarchy ;
But dying she as if forestalled my birth,
Since at the moment that defunct she lay,
I, helpless infant, from her womb came forth ;
And thus her fatal was my natal day.

XLIV

'But scarce five summers had elapsed entire
 From the sad day she burst earth's mortal ties,
 Than, yielding to our common fate, my sire
 Was called, perchance to meet her in the skies,
 Leaving the charge of me and of the state
 To his dear brother, whom he loved so well :
 Assured fidelity would animate
 His breast, if pity did in mortal dwell.

XLV

'Whence he assumed my guardianship, and feigned
 For my well-being such concern that he
 The vaunt of boundless piety obtained,
 Of love paternal and fidelity ;
 Or that black thoughts, beneath outside most fair,
 To hide within his breast he had begun ;
 Or that his love was really sincere,
 Since he would make me consort of his son.

XLVI

'I grew, and grew his son ; but never he
 Or style of knight or noble arts acquired ;
 Dead to all sense of fame or chivalry,
 His grovelling nature ne'er aloft aspired.
 His form deform was than his mind more fair,
 His pride unbounded as his avarice ;
 His acts so coarse, and such his habits were,
 That he could match himself alone in vice.

XLVII

'Now my good guardian destined I should wed
 This worthy youth, on him my goods bestow,
 Him making consort of my throne and bed :
 He many times distinctly told me so.
 To accomplish this long-cherished scheme, now tact,
 Now subtle wit, now eloquence he used,
 But promise never could from me extract ;
 Nay, sullen, I grew silent, or refused.

XLVIII

‘ One day he left with such sinister face,
 As did his thoughts transparently avow ;
 My future ill’s sad story I could trace
 Distinctly written in his lowering brow.
 Thenceforth disturbed was my nocturnal rest
 By ghosts and many a strange ominous dream :
 A fatal horror on my soul impressed,
 Did of impending woes the presage seem.

XLIX

‘ With pallid visage and in mournful mien,
 Oft stood before me my dead mother’s shade.
 Ah me ! how different from what I had seen
 On breathing canvass previously portrayed.
 “ Fly, my child, fly,” she cried, in her despair,
 “ A cruel death hangs o’er thy guileless soul ;
 The treacherous tyrant I can see prepare
 For thee alone the dagger and the bowl.”

L

‘ But what, alas, availed it, that my heart
 Gave strong presentiments of perils near,
 If, without any, counsel to impart,
 My youth was made irresolute by fear ?
 Myself to exile, and in nakedness
 Fly from the country that my childhood nursed,
 Such misery was, that I esteemed it less
 To close mine eyes where I had oped them first.

LI

‘ I dreaded death—ah, woe is me !—and yet
 (Who would believe the fact ?) I dared not fly ;
 I even feared to show my fear, lest it
 Might thus accelerate the time to die.
 In one continuous martyrdom I passed
 A troubled and most miserable life,
 Like one expecting that each hour’s his last,
 And o’er his neck beholds the impending knife.

G

LII

' In this condition—was it friendly fate
Or doom that destined me to end more dire?—
One of the royal officers of state,
Brought up from childhood by the king my sire,
Disclosed to me the fatal hour was near,
Fixed by the king to take my life away ;
And that he had promised to administer
To me the poison on that very day.

LIII

' Adding, it only was by instant flight
I could prolong my wretched life, and prayed
That, as elsewhere I had no hope of it,
I would accept his own devoted aid.
The generous offer of this loyal knight
Gave me such courage, that with him I planned,
Beneath the cover of protecting night,
To fly my uncle and my native land.

LIV

' The night closed in beyond her wont obscure,
And shrouded us beneath her friendly shades,
When from my palace home I passed secure,
My sole companions being two waiting maids.
But back to my paternal roof did I,
With streaming eyes, oft turn in my despair ;
Nor could their gaze at parting satisfy—
Still, still they looked, and fondly lingered there.

LV

' Mine eyes and thoughts both followed the same track,
And 'gainst their will my feet went on before ;
Like ship a sudden tempest takes aback,
And drives reluctant from the sheltering shore.
All night we travelled, and the following day,
By pathless mountains and untrodden plains ;
At length took shelter in a fort, which lay
Upon the confines of my fair domains.

LVI

' It was the castle of Arontè, since
 Arontè 'twas that me from danger led ;
 But when the double-faced perfidious prince
 Found I had 'scaped the mortal snares he spread,
 Inflamed with rage, upon us both he turned
 The very guilt his hate and envy bred,
 And made us guilty of the crime he burned
 To wreak himself upon my guiltless head.

LVII

' He said, by bribes I had Arontè won
 To mingle deadly poison in his bowl ;
 That, when he passed away, I might have none
 My will to bridle, or my youth control ;
 For that I, following my depraved desires,
 Would to my arms a thousand lovers take.
 Ah ! on my head may fall Heaven's blasting fires,
 Ere, sacred Chastity, thy laws I break !

LVIII

' That greedy hunger for my wealth, and thirst
 For innocent blood the monster overcame,
 Was bad enough, but that is not the worst :
 He wished to sully my immaculate name.
 The wretch, who feared the rising of the youth,
 So wove and glossed his lies, that in suspense
 The city, still uncertain of the truth,
 Might not stand up or arm in my defence.

LIX

' Nor though he sits upon my throne, nor tho'
 The base usurper wears my royal crown,
 Doth he place limit to my sufferings, so
 His innate cruelty incites him on.
 He'll burn Arontè's castle, unless he
 Himself, with all in it surrendereth ;
 And not with war alone my friends and me
 The monster threatens, but with pains and death.

LX

'This, as it were, his spotless front to free
 From the disfigurement of my disgrace ;
 And to its dignity, debased by me,
 Restore the honour of his throne and race.
 But fear's the cause, he dreading I should seize
 My rightful sceptre ; since my death alone,
 Too well the profligate usurper sees,
 Would on firm basis fix his tottering throne.

LXI

'And that will be the end of his desire,
 On which so bent the tyrant's mind appears,
 And quenched by my life's blood will be his ire,
 Which unextinguishable were by tears,
 If thou prevent him not : thee I intreat,
 Lorn, orphan, innocent—and may this flood
 Of bitter tears with which I bathe thy feet,
 Prevent the effusion of my guiltless blood.

LXII

'By these thy feet that trample the profane,
 By this thy hand in cause of right arrayed,
 By thy proud triumphs, by each sacred fane
 Which thou hast aided, and still seek'st to aid :
 Grant, for alone thou art able, my request ;
 In pity save my life and throne, Sir knight—
 Still I for pity ask not, if thy breast
 Remains unmoved by reason and by right.

LXIII

'Thee whom Heaven destines and permits by fate
 To will what's just, and what thou will'st to do,
 Preserve my life, and take thyself the state,
 Which if recovered, will become thy due.
 For my safe conduct, sire, I only sue
 From out thy numerous paladins but ten ;
 They will, the elders friends, the people true,
 Suffice to place me in my home again.

LXIV

'Nay one, the warder of the secret gate,
 Has pledged his word, in justice to my right,
 To unbar it; so that we may penetrate
 To the king's quarters in the dusk of night.
 Alone he bade me gain thy aid : howe'er
 Small, it would more assure him than if came
 Whole hosts to his assistance from elsewhere,
 So high he ranks thy flag, thy very name.'

LXV

This said, she ceased, awaiting his reply;
 Her manner prayed, her very silence spoke.
 In doubt to grant her suit or to deny,
 Contending feelings Godfrey's bosom shook :
 He feared barbarian wile, and deemed that those
 Faithless to God, no faith for man possessed.
 On the other hand, within him pity rose,
 Which never slumbers in magnanimous breast.

LXVI

Nor was it alone his natural charity
 Willed that this favour the fair suppliant gained;
 The advantage swayed him, since 'twould useful be
 That whosoever in Damascus reigned,
 On him dependent, should their cause uphold,
 And smooth the groundwork for their great emprise;
 One that could furnish weapons, troops and gold,
 To match the Egyptian host and its allies.

LXVII

While thus perplexed, his eyes to earth he bent,
 And turned and twisted every thought. The maid
 Upon his face hung painfully intent,
 Scanning the changes there; but since delayed
 The important answer was beyond belief,
 She feared refusal, and despairing sighed;
 At length her prayer refused the pious chief,
 But still in courteous, kindly words replied :

LXVIII

' Did Jesu's service not demand our swords,
 By Him selected for this great crusade,
 They were unsheathed for thee ; not pitying words,
 But valiant deeds, had given thee knightly aid.
 But till His people of their bonds are rid,
 Till from its thrall Jerusalem we free,
 Not right it were my forces to divide
 And so retard the course of victory.

LXIX

' But this I vow (my word I proffer thee
 As knightly pledge, on which securely rest) :
 If from their galling yoke we ever free
 Those walls to Heaven so precious and so blessed,
 Thee to restore, for gentle pity's sake,
 To that lost realm where first thy footsteps trod.
 But pity now would me less pious make,
 If first I rendered not His due to God.'

LXX

As thus he spake, the maiden drooped her head,
 And moveless stood, her eyes upon the ground ;
 Then raised them up, suffused with tears, and said
 With pleading gesture and lament profound :
 ' Ah wretched, wretched, to whom else did Heaven
 A life so hard, so immutable allot,
 That others change their bent, their nature even,
 Ere changed is my perverse, unhappy lot ?

LXXI

' In vain I grieve, and hopeless vainly spend
 Prayers to which dead are human breasts ; ah me !
 How can I hope the tyrant's will to bend
 By these my sorrows, that are lost on thee ?
 Still not of harshness do I thee accuse
 Because denying me this trifling aid,
 'Tis Heaven I charge, whence all my ill accrues,
 'Tis Heaven has thee inexorable made.

LXXII

'Thou from all such malevolence art free,
But 'tis my destiny that aid denies,
Cruel, relentless, fatal destiny ;
Ah, take this life, now hateful in mine eyes.
To have deprived me in their prime of life
Of my dear parents was a minor ill,
If thou didst not, as victim to the knife,
Robbed of my realm and captive see me still.

LXXIII

'And since the laws of modesty and zeal
Urge my departure, whither shall I fly,
Where seek asylum, or myself conceal
From the fierce tyrant ? Not beneath the sky
A spot so secret does the world contain,
But opes to gold ; why then delay should I ?
Death faces me, and if escape is vain,
Death I will meet, and by my own hand die.'

LXXIV

She ceased : a haughty and magnanimous scorn
Seemed to light up the lovely suppliant's face,
And as her heel gave signal of return,
Grief and disdain in every move they trace ;
Her tears in torrents unobstructed flowed,
Such as from sorrow blent with anger run,
And on her lids the rising tear-drops glowed
Like pearls and crystals glistening in the sun.

LXXV

Her cheeks, besprinkled with those living showers
That from her bosom trickled to her feet,
Appeared like snowy and vermilion flowers,
With the bright pearls of sparkling May-dew wet,
Which, when Aurora first appears, unfold
Their closed-up petals to the jocund air,
And the dawn looking from her throne of gold,
Longs to enwreath their treasures in her hair.

LXXVI

But the clear drops that in such ceaseless flow,
 Her lovely cheeks and snowy breast adorn,
 Produce the effect of subtle fires that glow
 In breasts of thousands, and concealed there, burn.
 O miracle ! that Love draws sparks from tears,
 And can by water hearts inflame ; alas !
 He over nature aye the mastery bears,
 But through her beauty doth himself surpass.

LXXVII

This counterfeited grief from many eyes
 Draws real tears, and melts the hardest heart ;
 Each is affected, and within him cries,
 ' If aid Prince Godfrey doth not now impart,
 Surely fierce tigress was his nurse, and he
 'Mid Alpine crags of flinty stone was born,
 Or 'mid the foaming billows of the sea ;
 Cruel ! to let such beauty vainly mourn.'

LXXVIII

But youthful Eustace, in whose heart the flame
 Of love and pity greater warmth awoke,
 While others whisper, nor their thoughts proclaim,
 Stept proudly forward and thus boldly spoke :
 ' My liege and brother, thy unswerving breast
 Too closely to its first intent adheres,
 Thus to refuse the wishes of the rest,
 Nor yield a little to our common prayers.

LXXIX

' I do not say that chiefs, upon whom falls
 The care of subject hosts of soldiery,
 Should turn their backs on these beleaguered walls,
 Or that their duties should neglected be ;
 But among us Adventurers, who bear
 No personal charge, and are less bound by laws,
 'Twere well befitting thy imperial care
 To choose ten champions in so just a cause.

LXXX

'Still in the service of his God he toils,
 Who draws his sword the guiltless to defend,
 And in His sight how precious are the spoils
 That, wrung from slaughtered tyrants, we suspend.
 But though I put completely out of sight
 The advantage that this emprise had repaid,
 Still duty calls me : I were recreant knight,
 E'er to refuse a helpless damsel aid.

LXXXI

'And Heaven forbid it were proclaimed in France,
 Or where'er else are valued honour's laws,
 That, false knights, we refused to break a lance
 In such a sacred and so just a cause !
 I, for my part, cast helm and mail aside,
 My stainless sword ungird, for I will ne'er
 Unworthily bear arms or steed bestride,
 Or more usurp the name of cavalier.'

LXXXII

Thus spake, and all the ranks of chivalry,
 Deeming his counsel worthy and most meet,
 Shout loud assent, and with concordant cry,
 Press round the captain and his grace entreat.
 'I yield,' he said at length, 'nor can refuse
 Where all with such unanimous voice combine ;
 Let her obtain this favour, if you choose,
 From your opinion, since opposed is mine.

LXXXIII

' But if ye still to Godfrey's voice give heed,
 Temper your transports, nor thus wildly rave.'
 Nor uttered more—enough 'twas to concede—
 All were contented with the boon he gave.
 What cannot thus fair woman's tears obtain,
 What the sweet accents of her siren tongue ?
 From beauty's lips proceeds a golden chain
 That in its trammels fetters old and young.

LXXXIV

Eustace at this recalled the lovely maid.
 'Thy sorrow cease,' he said, 'and dry thy tears,
 Since we will give thee such immediate aid
 As seems most needful to dispel thy fears.'
 At once Armida's cloudy looks subside,
 While such a sunny smile her aspect warms,
 That, as her eyes with her fair veil she dried,
 The heavens became enamoured of her charms.

LXXXV

She then returned, in sweet and gentle tone,
 Thanks for such ample measure of their grace,
 Saying it should to the whole world be known,
 And in her heart retain a lasting place.
 Her looks with voiceless eloquence revealed
 All that her tongue failed fully to express,
 And so her thoughts beneath false face concealed,
 That there were none suspected the princess.

LXXXVI

Seeing thence that Fortune with benignant smiles
 This her first trial of deception viewed,
 She, dreading interruption to her wiles,
 The wicked work determines to conclude,
 And more performs by witchcraft of her eyes
 Than Circe or Medæa did of old,
 And with her voice's siren melodies
 The most sagacious intellects cajoled.

LXXXVII

All means the fair enchantress doth embrace
 By which to draw new lovers to her snares,
 Nor keeps with all nor always the same face,
 But a changed aspect opportunely wears;
 A close collected look now chastely keeps,
 Now darts a wandering and voluptuous glance;
 These, too retiring, with the lash she whips,
 And reins back those, too swift in their advance.

LXXXVIII

If she sees any from her love retire,
Their thoughts restraining from timidity,
She unmask her smiles and on them opes the fire
Of her destructive eyes' artillery.
The backward thus with courage she inspires,
Assures the doubtful with fresh marks of cheer,
Inflaming thence their amorous desires,
Her burning glances thaw the frost of fear.

LXXXIX

To others, who o'erstep the boundaries,
By Cupid's blind adventurous guidance led,
Sparing she is of her dear words and eyes,
And frowns them into deference and dread ;
Still through her clouded brow and scornful air
A ray of soft compassionate pity gleams,
Whence, though abashed, they do not quite despair,
And burn the most when she most haughty seems.

XC

At times she leaves the crowd of cavaliers,
Settling her manner and her face to feign
A mournful look, and often draws the tears
Up to her eyes, then drives them back again,
Nor fails unnumbered simpletons to move
By these beguiling, these deceitful arts ;
In pity's flame thus tempering shafts of love,
With such strong arms she pierces all their hearts.

XCI

Then as if all such gloomy thoughts had gone,
And fresh new hopes were awakened in her breast,
On her fair forehead joy rekindled shone,
And, turning back, her lovers she addressed,
While, like twin suns, flash forth in full display
Her sunny glance and her celestial smile,
To chase the dark, dense clouds of grief away,
In which their hearts she had involved erewhile.

XCII

But while she sweetly smiles and sweetly speaks,
 And doubly thus intoxicates the sense,
 To quit its home the ecstatic spirit seeks,
 Unused before to rapture so intense.
 Ah, cruel tyrant, Love ! how equally
 Thy bitter wormwood and sweet honey kill ;
 Deadly the ailment and the remedy
 With which thou seek'st to cure that cureless ill.

XCIII

Thus by such opposite means, 'twixt ice and fire,
 'Twixt joy and sorrow, between hopes and fears,
 The fair deceiver kindles their desire,
 And aye inconstant at their anguish jeers.
 If any dare with trembling voice the pains,
 The heart-felt pains that torture him, express,
 To be a novice in love's way she feigns,
 Nor at the meaning of his words to guess.

XCIV

Or meekly casting down her eyes from him,
 Colours her cheeks with such shame-conscious grace
 As to conceal the rath and snowy rime
 Beneath the roses of her flushing face,
 Like those that in the glowing east proclaim
 In earliest, freshest hours Aurora's birth ;
 Confounded so, and blent with maiden shame,
 Shot the red flashes of her anger forth.

XCV

If she sees one that by his manner strives
 His burning passion to reveal, she flies ;
 Then to console him, means of speaking gives,
 And, with the breath that promises, denies.
 Thus tired, and all his expectations crossed,
 In a blind maze she leads him round all day,
 And he remains like hunter who has lost
 At eve all traces of his hunted prey.

XCVI

These were the arts by which she made such swarms
The subtle influence of her empire prove ;
Nay, rather, were the irresistible arms
That them enchained as bondslaves to her love.
What marvel, then, that fierce Achilles was,
That Hercules and Theseus were Love's spoil,
If even those who fight in Jesu's cause
Are caught at times in his entangling toil ?

CANTO V.

I

WHILE to her love the insidious siren lured
The cavaliers, in such seductive guise,
Nor had alone the promised ten secured,
But in addition, to steal others tries ;
Within himself the anxious chief demurs,
To whom the emprise entrust, with her for guide,
Since the great worth of the Adventurers,
And wish of each, much room for choice supplied.

II

But he at length with cautious ken decreed
That freely from their body they should make
Choice of a chief, Dudoné to succeed,
Who the selection on himself might take ;
Thus cause of jealousy he would not sow,
By interfering with their will ; nay, more,
He would his high appreciation show
(Their rightful due) of that illustrious corps.

III

He called them therefore to his tent, and said :
'Ye all have heard my sentiments, which were
Not to refuse this injured damsel aid,
But it to season more mature defer.
This I again propose, and well ye may
My counsels follow, by experience bought—
Since in this world, which changes every day,
Unchangeableness is often change of thought.

IV

‘ But if ye deem from danger to abstain
 Would ill become your order ; if your bold
 And chivalrous temperaments disdain
 Counsel that seems too cautious and too cold,
 Far be it from me to keep you ’gainst your will,
 Or to retract my promise given as knight.
 No ; be it mine my duties to fulfil
 Towards you with rein most gentle and most light.

V

‘ I give you leave to stay or to proceed ;
 This must depend upon your own free will :
 But first your slain commander to succeed,
 Elect one worthy that high post to fill.
 Let him select the ten ; but on no plea
 Can I permit him to exceed the ten.
 In this I hold to my authority,
 Nor in aught else will I his powers restrain.’

VI

Thus Godfrey spake ; and all consenting, thus
 His brother Eustace for the rest replied :
 ‘ As caution provident and scrupulous
 Becoming is, O captain, on thy side,
 So hands to do, no less than hearts to dare,
 Is, as our due, required from us : advice,
 And well-weighed scruples that in others are
 Prevision just, in us were cowardice.

VII

‘ And since the hazard is so trifling, when
 With the advantage in the balance weighed,
 With thy permission the selected ten
 Will march to the honoured emprise with the maid.’
 He thus concluded, and his secret fire
 With specious artifice to cover strove
 ‘ Neath knightly zeal ; and others feigned desire
 For honour, which was but desire of love.

VIII

But younger Buglion, who, with envious eye,
 Looked on Rinaldo, fair Sofia's son,
 And all his virtues viewed invidiously,
 Since in a form so beautiful they shone,
 Wished him away ; for subtle jealousy
 Inspired most cautious feelings in his heart :
 Whence, drawing aside his dangerous rival, he
 Addressed him thus with all a flatterer's art :

IX

' O greater son of an illustrious sire,
 That, boy, hast gained such great repute in war,
 Who to the leadership may dare aspire
 Of that bold band, of which a part we are ?
 I, who could scarcely to Dudoné stoop,
 And that in virtue of his age alone,
 To whom can I submit to of our troop ?
 I, Godfrey's brother—save to thee, see none.

X

' As noble as the noblest thou art born,
 And in renown bear'st off the palm from me,
 Nor would himself the greater Buglion scorn
 To be as knight inferior deemed to thee.
 Thee, then, as leader for our troop I claim,
 If careless thou to be this Syrian's knight.
 Nor can I think Rinaldo values fame
 Won in the dim obscurity of night.

XI

' Here is not wanting a more open spot
 With clearer light thy valour to reflect ;
 And I will cause, if thou refusest not,
 That the others thee to that high post elect ;
 But as I am doubtful still, nor know which way
 To bend my wavering and irresolute heart,
 I claim the privilege with thee to stay,
 Or with Armida, at my choice, depart.'

XII

Here Eustace ceased, nor, as he thus appealed,
Could keep his cheeks from crimsoning the while.
Rinaldo saw his thoughts thus ill concealed
Beneath his blushes, which drew forth a smile ;
But since on him Love's arrows fell more slow,
Nor more than skin deep had incised his breast,
He did not jealous of a rival grow,
Nor cared the maid to follow with the rest.

XIII

Deeply was graved in his tenacious heart
The fate that him of his dear friend deprived.
He deemed it foul dishonour on his part,
That for so long Arganté had survived ;
Still he both heard with pleasure and with pride
The call that would him to such honour raise,
And his young heart was joyed and gratified
By the sweet sounds of that veracious praise.

XIV

Whence he replied : ' Exalted station I
Would rather much more merit than obtain,
Nor envy that, if raised by virtue high,
Others hold lofty posts and rule and reign.
But at the call of honour, if you deem
That place my due, I will not stand aloof ;
Well pleased I should be that ye all esteem
My worthiness by such convincing proof.

XV

' That post I neither seek, then, nor reject—
If given me, of the ten thou shalt be one.'
Him Eustace leaves determined to subject
His gallant comrades' wishes to his own ;
But to that place Gernando urged his claim,
For, though Armida pierced him with Love's dart,
Less power had woman's smiles than thirst of fame,
To gain ascendance o'er his haughty heart.

H

XVI

From Norway's monarchs, who o'er many lands
 Dominion held, Gernando traced descent,
 And all the princely titles and commands
 Of his proud ancestry his pride augment.
 Rinaldo vaunts his own deserts before
 All his departed forefathers had done,
 Though they for full five hundred years and more,
 In peace and war had equal glory won.

XVII

But this barbarian potentate, who weighed
 By power and gold his estimate of things,
 And deemed all excellence obscured by shade,
 Unless ennobled by the blood of kings,
 Could not endure that for the post he sought,
 Rinaldo strove in merit with him ; nay,
 Became so frantic that beyond all thought,
 Despite and anger carried him away.

XVIII

So that Avernus' evil spirit, who
 The opening saw with such advantage fraught,
 In silence to his fevered bosom flew,
 And deftly seized the rudder of his thought,
 And evermore inflamed his rage and hate,
 Goading to madness his excited breast,
 And caused a voice his soul to penetrate,
 Which in these terms the haughty prince addressed :

XIX

' Rinaldo vies with thee : thus much avail
 The idle numbers of his ancestry ?
 Let him his vassals and allies detail,
 Who on a par would place himself with thee ;
 His sceptre show, and his dead sires compare
 With thy live kings in regal dignity.
 Ah ! what a prince of poor estate may dare,
 A prince, too, born in servile Italy !

XX

' Henceforth, or vanquished or victorious, he
 Was victor when thy rival he became,
 Since men (and 'twill his proudest honour be)
 Will say, to blows he with Gernando came ;
 The post held by Dudoné formerly
 Thee with fresh splendour and renown had lit,
 And still not less would have received from thee ;
 He dimmed its brilliancy in seeking it.

XXI

' And if the voiceless, breathless soul bestow
 A passing thought upon the affairs of men,
 What just resentment thinkest thou wilt show
 Thy former captain, old Dudoné, when
 From his bright home amid the starry spheres,
 Upon yon haughty boy he turns his eye ;
 Who, making light of his desert and years,
 Audacious stripling, dares with him to vie ?

XXII

' Ay, dares and strives forsooth, and carries back
 Applause and honour, not reproach and blame ;
 Nor do advisers and abettors lack
 Encouragement and praise—O common shame !—
 But should Prince Godfrey see it, and permit
 Him to defraud thee of thy rightful due,
 Suffer it not : thou must not suffer it,
 But show him who thou art, and what canst do.'

XXIII

These words fresh fuel to his ire impart ;
 Like shaken torch, his passions fiercer rise,
 Nor keep within his swoln and pregnant heart,
 But from his bold tongue burst, and flashing eyes.
 All that he thinks Rinaldo can defame,
 He publishes to his disparagement ;
 He paints him proud, and dares his courage blame
 As rash, foolhardy, and improvident.

XXIV

And all that is magnanimous and fair,
 Generous and high-souled in the illustrious youth,
 He censures, as though blemishes they were,
 And into shade malignly casts the truth ;
 And stormed so, that at length his rival heard
 The wide-spread blasts of his malignant breath ;
 Yet would not hold his tongue, nor, undeterred,
 That frenzy curb, which led him to his death.

XXV

Since the foul fiend that moved his tongue in lieu
 Of exiled reason and his thoughts expressed,
 Caused him his unjust insults to renew,
 And added fuel to his burning breast.
 Within the camp was place of great extent,
 Where a choice band oft met for martial games,
 And there, in wrestling and the tournament,
 Increased the skill and vigour of their frames.

XXVI

Now here, what time the crowd was thickest, he
 Accused Rinaldo, and upon him flung,
 Prompted by hell—as was his destiny—
 The envenomed arrows of his spiteful tongue.
 Rinaldo near, as thus his slanders rung,
 No longer could contain himself, but roared,
 ‘ You lie !’ at once on his traducer sprung,
 And quick as thought unsheathed his vengeful sword.

XXVII

Thunder his voice, his steel the flash appeared
 Heralding fall of thunderbolt. His fate
 Gernando seeing, shook, and from it feared
 No means there were himself to extricate.
 But all the camp being witness, he put on
 An air of bravery and confidence ;
 His foe awaiting, and with sabre drawn,
 Stood firmly in a posture of defence.

XXVIII

At this burst forth a simultaneous flash,
As from their scabbards myriad falchions flew ;
Since thither numbers of the young and rash,
Hustling and jostling from all quarters drew.
The cries confused of that tumultuous host,
Resounding through the air, resemblance bore
To what is heard upon the wild sea-coast,
When the wind mingles with the billows' roar.

XXIX

But not for menace or entreaty would
The insulted knight repress his fury's fires ;
Heedless of cries and obstacles that could
His progress bar, to vengeance he aspires.
Away he dashes amid men and arms,
Whirling to right and left his thundering sword ;
Thus clears the way, and spite of guardian swarms,
Singly confronts the pale Norwegian lord ;

XXX

And with his hand by rage unmastered still,
Against him feigned and aimed a thousand blows ;
Now chest, now head he sought with wary skill,
The right side now, and now the other chose.
So rapid and impetuous was his hand,
As to deceive all art, and mock the eye ;
Then, where expected least, the flashing brand
Falls, strikes, and penetrates his adversary.

XXXI

Nor pause did ever the avenging sword,
Till it was buried twice through his cuirass ;
The wretched prince sank 'neath the wounds, and poured
His soul and spirit through the double pass.
His steel the victor sheathed, though reeking still,
Nor took more notice of his fallen foe,
But turned elsewhere, and his embittered will
Cast off, now sated by his overthrow.

XXXII

Godfrey being meanwhile to the tumult led,
 All of a sudden saw the appalling sight :
 Gernando fallen, his hair and cloak blood-red,
 And his face smitten with death's ghastly blight.
 He heard the plaints and lamentations raised,
 And saw the tears o'er the slain warrior poured.
 ' Who has thus dared,' he shouted all amazed,
 ' Here, where 'twas most forbid, to draw the sword ?'

XXXIII

Arnaldo, dearest comrade of the dead,
 Tells how (and telling aggravates the case)
 Rinaldo slew him, by mad impulse led,
 And but from trifling motives, to disgrace
 And turn that falchion, in Christ's service worn,
 Against a champion of the Cross ; that he
 Despised his rule and held in utter scorn
 That law of which he could not ignorant be ;

XXXIV

And that by law death was the offender's fate,
 Blood needed blood, as it was there laid down ;
 Death, since the crime was in itself so great,
 Death, since in place so sacred it was done ;
 That bad example for the rest 'twould make,
 Should grace on such enormities ensue,
 And that the injured would that vengeance take
 Which was alone from the arm of Justice due ;

XXXV

That thence would quarrels and disunion spread
 Between the rival factions of each knight.
 He called to mind the merits of the dead
 With all that could or wrath or ruth excite.
 But Tancred contradicted him and took
 Part with the absent slandered cavalier.
 Prince Godfrey listened, but his rigid look
 Less cause for hope afforded than for fear.

XXXVI

Then Tancred added : 'Sire, remember who
 And what Rinaldo is, his claims, his worth,
 What personal honour to himself is due,
 What to his princely and illustrious birth,
 What to his uncle Guelph. It is not wise
 To the same level punishment to adjust ;
 In different ranks the same crime different is :
 'Twixt peers alone equality is just.'

XXXVII

'The lowliest should,' the pious chief replies,
 'Obedience learn from those of high estate.
 Ill dost thou argue, Tancred, ill advise
 That I forsooth gave licence to the great ;
 What were my power if I but swayed the base,
 And o'er the mob alone dominion bore ?
 My sceptre mockery, my command disgrace :
 On such conditions I would rule no more.

XXXVIII

'No, free it was entrusted to my care,
 And none shall e'er curtail it or oppose,
 And well I know both when I should and where
 Different rewards and punishments impose.
 And now preserving strict equality,
 No difference make 'twixt vassals and their lords.'
 Thus spoke Prince Godfrey, nor could answer he,
 O'ercome with reverence by his Godlike words.

XXXIX

Raymond, in school of antique strictness bred,
 His words applauded as both just and wise :
 'Who fairly rules with arts like these,' he said,
 'Makes himself honoured in his subjects' eyes.
 Imperfect is the government of kings
 Where man expects not punishment, but grace ;
 Empires decay, since clemency but brings
 Ruin, that has not wholesome fear for base.'

XL

Thus Raymond spake : his speech Tancredi heard,
 Nor longer tarried in their company,
 But with hot haste to Prince Rinaldo spurred
 His noble charger, which appeared to fly.
 Rinaldo had his own pavilion gained,
 Soon as in death he had quenched his fierce foe's pride ;
 Here Tancred found him, and the sum explained
 Of charge and answer made on either side,

XLI

Concluding thus—' Although external signs
 I deem no real index of the heart,
 Since mortals hide their unavowed designs
 In too internal and too deep a part,
 Yet from what Godfrey's tell-tale looks betrayed,
 Which were not silent all, assert I dare,
 Thèe he would from thy pride of place degrade
 The common lot of criminals to share.'

XLII

At that Rinaldo smiled, and with a look
 Where through his smiles outflashed disdainful pride,
 ' Let them in fetters plead their cause who brook
 Slaves to remain or helots are,' he cried ;
 ' Free I was born and lived, and free will die,
 Ere hand or foot submit to shameful chain ;
 This hand is used to arms and victory,
 And to vile bonds will ne'er submission deign.

XLIII

' But should Prince Godfrey render this reward
 To my deserts, or dare imprison me
 And drag me hence with ignominious cord,
 To ignoble jail as one of low degree,
 Let him or come or send, I will not budge ;
 And will be seen a bloody tragedy
 (As arms and fate our differences judge,)
 Choice entertainment for the enemy.

XLIV

'Bring me my arms !' this said, he loudly cried,
 And in steel suit got ready for the field,
 The fatal sword suspended from his side,
 And his arm loaded with the massy shield.
 Most chivalrous and princely was his mien
 As he in armour shone like flashing leven,
 Resembling thee, horrific Mars, when seen
 Descending down from the fifth cirque of heaven.

XLV

Meanwhile Tancredi tried to mollify
 His haughty heart, and fiery spirit soothe :
 ' Unconquered boy,' he said, ' thy gallantry
 The roughest task I know can render smooth.
 Thy gallantry is most secure, I know,
 Amid the terrors of the bloodiest fray ;
 But Heaven forbid thou shouldst its virtue show,
 By injuring us so cruelly to-day.

XLVI

' What wouldst thou ? say, wouldst thou thy hands imbrue
 In brother's blood and suicidal war ?
 Wouldst thou the breasts of Christ's own flock pierce thro'
 The Christ himself, of whom they members are ?
 Can vain regard for fleeting honour here,
 Which comes and goes like sea-waves, in thine eyes
 More influence have than zeal, O cavalier,
 For glory which is deathless in the skies ?

XLVII

' For God's sake, no ! o'ercome thyself, and still
 Thy headstrong spirit, and thy pride lay down ;
 Yield not from fear, but from a pious will,
 And glorious palms will thy compliance crown.
 And if thou'lt deign example to pursue,
 From what occurred in inexperienced age,
 Know, tho' the Faithful once provoked me too,
 I shunned all quarrel, and restrained my rage.

XLVIII

' For having gained Cilicia's realm, and there
 The glorious banner of the Cross displayed,
 Later came Baldwin, who, by means unfair,
 Despoiled me of the conquest I had made.
 His wily face such friendly purpose wore,
 As to conceal his thoughts and avarice hide ;
 Yet I to get it back by force forbore,
 Altho' success were certain, had I tried.

XLIX

' But if confinement thy haught soul refuse,
 And fetters spurn as ignominious weight,
 And those observances to follow choose,
 Which men, as laws of honour, advocate ;
 Leave me to excuse thee to the captain here,
 And thou to Boëmond, at Antioch, fly.
 Since I scarce deem it safe for thee to bear
 The first outburst of his severity.

L

' But rest assured, should 'gainst our arms combine
 The Egyptian hordes, or other Pagan band,
 That still more brightly will thy valour shine,
 Thee absent, wandering in a foreign land.
 Without Rinaldo will the camp appear
 Maimed, like a trunk bereft of arm or hand.'
 Here Guelph arrived, and urged the cavalier
 To leave at once, nor their joint prayers withstand.

LI

The fiery youth's exasperated heart
 Yields to their judgment, to their counsel bends ;
 He now no more refuses to depart
 From the Frank army and his faithful friends.
 Meanwhile his comrades had around him flown,
 And with him begged permission to proceed ;
 He thanked them all, but took with him alone
 Two trusty squires, and vaulted on his steed.

LII

Away he rides, inspired by love of fame,
 That powerful stimulant to noble breast :
 On glorious deeds his soul had fixed its aim,
 Which did a thousand rare exploits suggest :
 'Mid hostile tribes to go, and gather there
 Cypress or palm, in honour of his God ;
 Scour Egypt's plains, and penetrate to where
 From their dark source Nile's mystic waters flowed.

LIII

But Guelph, as soon as the hot-headed youth
 Thus pressed to go, had taken leave, behind
 No longer stayed, but galloped off forsooth
 To where he expected the camp's chief to find.
 Who, when he saw him, raised his voice and cried :
 'Guelph! thou art the one I most desired to see,
 And have this moment sent on every side
 Our fleetest heralds to make search for thee.'

LIV

Then having caused the others to recede,
 In voice subdued began this grave discourse :
 'Truly thy nephew doth all bounds exceed
 When o'er his spirit rage exerts its force :
 He scarce can bring, O Guelph, in my belief,
 For deed so heinous justifying cause,
 Tho' could he do so, it were great relief ;
 But all ranks Godfrey rules with equal laws,

LV

'And will the guardian and defender be
 In every case of what is just and right,
 Keeping his heart for equal judgment free
 From tyrant passions that o'errule it might.
 Now if Rinaldo was, as some pretend,
 Constrained to violate our well-known laws
 And discipline's stern rules, then let him bend
 To our tribunal, and make good his cause.

LVI

'Let him come freely, nor this grace abuse,
Which to his worth I am content to show;
But should he prove rebellious and refuse—
For well his fiery temperament I know—
Be it thine to bring, and see the cavalier
Forces not one most merciful, to be
Avenger, when by duty forced, severe
Of outraged justice and authority.'

LVII

Thus spake Prince Godfrey, and thus Guelph replied:
'The soul that shrinks from infamy could not
Hear words so false and wounding to its pride,
And not revenge the insult on the spot.
If the bold youth the foul-mouthed slanderer slew,
Who can set bounds to justifiable ire?
Who count the blows and weigh the sentence due,
When burns the contest and the soul's on fire?'

LVIII

'But what thou askest, that the cavalier
Should to thy sovran judgment bow his head,
It grieves me, cannot be; since far from here
In dudgeon hath the froward stripling fled.
But I will prove, in absence of the youth,
Should any bring false charge behind his back,
Or wound his honour with malignant tooth,
He justly punished an unjust attack.

LIX

'Rightly from that vain vapourer, I say,
He shore the horns of his presumptuous pride;
But wrong he was thy ban to disobey:
In that alone he was not justified.'
He ceased, and Godfrey said: 'Well, let him go
And brawl elsewhere, but here we must have peace;
Nor must thou seed of farther quarrels sow:
For God's sake, now, let all dissensions cease!'

LX

Meanwhile the guilty traitress never ceased
 For the assistance promised her to sue ;
 All day she entreated, and in practice placed
 All that her beauty, wit, or art could do.
 But when, extending its dusk livery,
 Night in the west had curtained day from view,
 Between two matrons and two esquires she
 To her pavilion secretly withdrew.

LXI

But altho' mistress of deceit, and tho'
 Of winning manners and refined address,
 And tho' so fair that Heaven did ne'er bestow
 On mortal such exceeding loveliness,
 So that the army's most illustrious knights
 She held by tie most strong and most secure ;
 Still, all her lures inviting to delights
 Unable were the pious chief to lure.

LXII

Vainly she tried his rigid heart to bend
 To life of love by suicidal sweets ;
 For, as a bird when cloyed will not descend
 To where the fowler offering food entreats ;
 World-sated, so, its pleasures frail the knight
 Spurned, as by lonely path to heaven he toiled,
 And all the snares that 'gainst his upward flight
 False Cupid set, his saint-like virtue foiled.

LXIII

No obstacles could turn his thoughts aside
 From the one path prescribed by God : still she
 Countless new forms, countless devices tried,
 A very Proteus she appeared to be ;
 Her witching manner and provocative smiles
 Had wakened love within the coldest hearts,
 But here lost were by grace Divine her wiles,
 And more than useless her most artful arts.

LXIV

The lovely maid who thought she could inflame
 The chastest heart by twinkle of her eyes—
 How mortified and crest-fallen she became,
 And how o'ercome by spite and by surprise!—
 Resolves her forces to direct at length
 Where she may find resistance less severe :
 E'en so abandons walls of too great strength
 A baffled chief, and turns his arms elsewhere.

LXV

But not less 'gainst the enchantress' arms and art
 Tancredi did invulnerable prove :
 Since other passion occupied his heart,
 In it no place was for a second love.
 As poison poison neutralises, so
 Did his old flame oppose all new desire :
 These two alone succumbed not to the foe,
 But more or less all others felt her fire.

LXVI

Altho' lamenting that complete success
 Had not attended her designs and art,
 Still, as she did such noble spoil possess
 Of famous heroes, she's consoled in part,
 And plans, ere knowledge of her frauds they gain,
 Them to transport to safer regions, where
 She may secure them with another chain
 Than those soft silken ones which now they wear.

LXVII

And as the period which the captain had
 Fixed to assist her had arrived at last,
 To him she reverently came and said :
 ' The appointed day, sire, is already past,
 And if the guilty tyrant heard by chance
 I to thy arms had flown for succour, he
 Would straight prepare his forces for defence,
 Nor then so easy would the emprise be.

LXVIII

'Then, ere he heareth such important news
 From Fame's uncertain voice or certain spies,
 From out thy bravest, let thy pity choose
 Some few to aid me in this enterprize ;
 Since if just Heaven forget not innocence,
 Nor with distorted eye man's actions see,
 I shall regain my kingdom, which will thence
 In peace and war thy tributary be.'

LXIX

Thus argued she. Unable to recede,
 The captain gave assent to her request,
 Altho', she being impatient to proceed,
 He saw the election with himself must rest.
 Each with unwonted instance urged his claim
 To be admitted of the chosen band,
 Whence the emulation that this roused in them
 Made all importunate in their demand.

LXX

She, who thus saw their inmost hearts exposed,
 With them adopts another instrument,
 And artfully the wretched sting imposed
 Of jealousy, to scourge them and torment,
 Knowing full well without such spur that love
 Grows old and sluggish. So the crafty steed
 With easy paces only deigns to move
 If there be none that follow or precede.

LXXI

Her subtle words she apports in such guise,
 To this a smile, to that a flattering leer,
 That each the other views with envious eyes,
 And hope ne'er dawns but chilled by jealous fear.
 The frantic crowds of her admirers, who
 Unable are their passions to restrain,
 O'erleap all bounds, all sense of shame eschew,
 And even Godfrey reprimands in vain.

LXXII

He, who to satisfy them all desired,
 Nor leaned to one more than another, tho'
 Somewhat by shame and indignation fired,
 To see his dukes such doting folly show ;
 Still, as they would not from their loadstar turn,
 He to accord them fresh advice supplied :
 ' Write down your names and place them in an urn,
 And let Chance judge, and this your case decide.'

LXXIII

At once each cavalier inscribed his name,
 Which in the urn was placed and shaken o'er,
 Then drawn by lot : when lo ! the first that came
 Was Pembroke's noble earl, Artemidore.
 Succeeding his, Gherardo's name was read ;
 Then Vincilao's came to his great joy,
 He, who was erst so prudent and so staid,
 Now, hoary lover, plays the love-sick boy.

LXXIV

Oh ! what delight these three first chosen show,
 Their eyes how teeming with that ecstasy
 Which from the full full heart doth overflow,
 To find love favoured thus by Destiny.
 The rest feel jealousy's heart-scalding pang,
 Whose names the tantalising urn conceals,
 And on his lips in mute attention hang,
 Who the scroll opens and the name reveals.

LXXV

Guasco was fourth ; Rodolpho him succeeds ;
 The next the Fates to Olderic award ;
 William Ronciglion after that he reads,
 Then Henry, and Bavarian Everard ;
 Last was Rambaldo, he who later chose
 That faith to change he now to Christ professed
 (Has love such influence then ?)—This brings to a close
 The ten agreed on, and excludes the rest.

LXXVI

Burning with envy, rage, and jealousy,
 The rest call Fortune unjust, and complain,
 Hard-hearted Love, most bitterly of thee,
 To let fate arbitrate in thy domain.
 But, as instinctively the human mind
 That which is most forbidden most desires,
 Many in spite of Fortune have designed
 The maid to follow when heaven pales its fires.

LXXVII

Follow they will in sunshine and in shade,
 And hazard life in battling for her rights ;
 The occasion seizing, unto this the maid
 Them with sweet sighs and broken words invites,
 And now with this and now with that doth grieve
 That without him she must depart. Meanwhile,
 Armed, the ten champions of the chief take leave,
 Lured by the spell of her bewitching smile.

LXXVIII

The sage minutely warns them ere they part
 How false is Pagan honour and how light,
 Their word how insecure, and with what art
 Man should their snares and hostile purpose slight.
 But scattered to the wind his precepts were,
 For when did Love learn wisdom from the wise ?
 Them he dismissed at length, nor would the fair
 Postpone her going even till sunrise.

LXXIX

The conqueror goes, and with her leads along
 The rival knights in her triumphant train,
 And of her other lovers leaves the throng
 To evils infinite. But when again
 Dark night came forth and 'neath her wings brought back
 Silence profound and errant dreams renewed,
 Many, as Love disposes them, the track
 Of fair Armida furtively pursued.

LXXX

First Eustace followed her ; he scarcely stayed
 E'en for the shroud of shadow-bearing night.
 Thro' the thick gloom his way he quickly made,
 A blind guide leading him in his blind flight ;
 All night he wandered in the genial air,
 But when the sun's life-giving radiance rose,
 He spied Armida and her escort where
 A burgh last night afforded them repose.

LXXXI

Swiftly he flew to her : him by his crest
 At once Rambaldo recognized, and cried :
 'Why comest here? of what art thou in quest?'
 'I come to join Armida,' he replied,
 'Nor is there who will trustier service pay,
 If she disdain me not nor disapprove.'
 Rambaldo then : 'And to such honour, say,
 Who has elected you?' He answered : 'Love !

LXXXII

'Me Love elected, random Fortune thee :
 Which is more fitting arbiter to choose?'
 Rambaldo said : 'Thou dost but prove to me
 Thy title false, and useless tactics use ;
 Nor with the lawful champions of the maid
 Canst thou presume to mix, unlawful knight.'
 Provoked at this, the impetuous stripling said :
 'And who'll prevent me or deny my right?'

LXXXIII

'I will,' Rambaldo fearlessly replied,
 And dashed against his rival at the word.
 No less impatience Eustace testified,
 And with like eagerness unsheathed his sword.
 But their soul's tyrant rushed between the two
 With outstretched hand their anger to restrain ;
 To one, 'Ah grieve not,' she exclaimed, 'that you
 Another comrade, I a champion gain.

LXXXIV

'If you desire my safety, why deprive
 Me of fresh succour in this urgent strait?'
 To Eustace: 'Opportunely you arrive
 To guard my honour and avert my fate.
 Unreasonable 'twere that I prevent
 Such friends from coming, or their aid disclaim.'
 As thus she spoke and on her journey went,
 From various quarters various champions came.

LXXXV

From here, from there, unknown to each they came,
 Each sourly scowling at the other. She
 Welcomed them all, and showed to all the same
 Delight once more her gallant friends to see;
 But when the dawn had night's dark shadows cleared,
 Godfrey at once of their departure knew;
 His mind, prophetic of misfortune, feared
 The untold evils that might thence ensue.

LXXXVI

Him, as he mused, a herald stood before,
 Travel-stained, breathless, and of mournful mien,
 Resembling one that bitter tidings bore,
 On whose sad forehead the sad news was seen.
 'O prince,' he said, 'soon, soon upon these seas
 Egypt's immense armada will appear!
 From William, who commands the Genoese
 Fleet, this intelligence to thee I bear.'

LXXXVII

He added, 'that a convoy from the fleet,
 While stores escorting for the camp's supplies
 With camels and well-laden horse, did meet,
 Midway from thence, a terrible surprise,
 The guards being slain or prisoners made; that not
 'Scaped of their force a single cavalier,
 Arabian robbers, in a lonely spot,
 Having attacked them in the front and rear.

LXXXVIII

‘And that the license and unbridled force
 Of these barbarians has become so great,
 That like a torrent which o’erleaps its course
 And finds no check, they gather and dilate.
 Whence, to strike terror in those lawless bands,
 ’Twere well some squadrons from the host to send,
 And so secure the roads that from the sands
 Of Syria’s seaboard to the camp extend.’

LXXXIX

From tongue to tongue alarming rumours fly,
 And in a moment thro’ the army spread.
 The thoughts of famine that appears so nigh
 The vulgar fill with overwhelming dread.
 The observant chief, who with profound dismay
 Seeing their courage had received a shock,
 Sought to console and chase their fears away
 By hopeful words and reassuring look.

XC

‘Ye, who such countless perils have passed o’er
 In various distant latitudes with me ;
 Champions of Christ ! created to restore
 The many losses of Christianity ;
 Who Persia’s arms and Greece’s snares of yore,
 Seas, storms, cold, mountain passes overcame ;
 Who the dire pangs of thirst and hunger bore ;
 What ! are you frightened now?—for shame ! for shame

XCI

‘What ! doth not God, who leads you with such care,
 As in severer trials has been proved,
 Assure your spirits ? or hath He elsewhere
 His clement arm and countenance removed ?
 Soon your past toils ye will with joy recall,
 When at His shrine your promised vows ye pay ;
 Meanwhile bear up with courage, and let all
 Reserve themselves for that triumphant day.’

XCII

By such like words, and by his looks serene,
He cheered their 'wildered spirits, and repressed
A thousand sick and carking cares within
The deep recesses of his anxious breast :
How best such various nations to maintain
'Mid loss and scarcity ; how Egypt's fleet
Oppose successfully upon the main,
And how the Arab plunderers defeat.

CANTO VI.

I

BUT brighter hopes console and reassure
The drooping hearts of the beleaguered side ;
Since, besides all their stores, at night's obscure
They were with other aliments supplied.
Northwards they had with engines fortified,
And war's most formidable arms, the walls :
Which thus increased in height and strength, defied
The shock of rams and strokes of flying balls.

II

Nor ceased the king to make them still upraise
The walls around and outworks fortify ;
Or by the golden sun's effulgent rays,
Or when the moon and stars lit up the sky.
Forging new arms no rest the armourer knows,
For ever sweating with incessant stroke.
But while preparing, scornful of repose,
Arganté sought the monarch, and thus spoke :

III

' And pray, how long, cooped up in jail like this,
Must we endure a slow disgraceful siege ?
I hear indeed the glowing anvils hiss,
And ring of corslet, casque, and shield, my liege,
But see not to what use. These robbers prance
At their free will through all the burghs and plains ;
Nor is there one dare check their bold advance,
Or break their slumbers with the clarion's strains.

IV

'Ne'er interrupted by unseemly fights
Are their gay suppers or rich banquets ; nay,
Unbroken days and unmolested nights
They pass in calm security away.
But you by famine overcome, I fear,
In the long run will fall an easy prey,
Or like base cowards rot ignobly here,
Should Egypt more her promised aid delay.

V

'I, for my part, will not ignoble doom
My glory shroud ; nor me another day
Within these gates, as in a living tomb,
The lustre of another sun survey ;
With this my life let Destiny do all
That is already 'stablished in the sky,
But unrevenged at least I will not fall,
Nor without drawing the sword, dishonoured, die.

VI

'But were all sparks of your accustomed might
Extinguished not within your hearts, I see
Not death in open, honourable fight,
But certain hope of life and victory.
Firm and resolved then 'gainst these plunderers,
And against Fate itself, let us contest,
Since oft in greatest danger it occurs
That most audacious counsels are the best.

· VII

'But deem'st thou 'twere too great temerity
In one grand sortie to lead forth thy spears ;
Arrange at least that this thy quarrel be
Defined and settled by two cavaliers.
And that the Christian captain may receive
More willingly our challenge, to that knight
Let us the choice of ground and weapons leave,
Let him the terms determine of the fight.

VIII

'Then did two hands alone 'gainst me appear,
 And but one soul, however bold and strong,
 By no mischance whatever need'st thou fear,
 That at my hands thy cause would suffer wrong.
 In place of fickle Fate and Destiny,
 Trust for thy triumphs to this hand alone :
 Take it in pledge of certain victory ;
 In it confide, and saved's thy life and throne.'

IX

'Intrepid youth,' replied the king, 'although
 In me the marks of hoary age you trace,
 To draw the sword this arm is not so slow,
 Nor is this soul so slothful and so base
 That I prefer to rot ignobly here
 To dying nobly on the open field,
 Had I a doubt or ev'n the slightest fear
 Of the distress and want thou hast revealed.'

X

'May God avert such infamy ! But now
 I'll tell thee what from others I conceal :
 Nicæan Solyman, who burneth how
 To avenge his losses, has, with noble zeal,
 Contrived from Afric's deserts to unite
 The scattered ranks of many a nomad horde,
 And trusts, the foe attacking in the night,
 Supplies of food, and succour to afford.'

XI

'Soon it may be he come ; and if meanwhile
 Our castles round are captured and o'erthrown,
 Let us not care, if from the foe I still
 Preserve my royal sceptre and my throne ;
 But for God's sake that fervent spirit prune,
 Which in thy bosom burneth to excess,
 And wait, O prince, a season opportune
 To increase thy glory and my wrongs redress.'

XII

This nettled sorely the bold cavalier,
 Who was the soldan's rival, and as such
 Was most profoundly mortified to hear
 That on his aid the king relied so much.
 'Peace, sire, and war on thy sole will depend,'
 Arganté said ; 'that's thy affair alone ;
 Wait then ; the mighty Solyman attend,
 And let him save thy realm who lost his own.

XIII

'Let him, celestial messenger, descend,
 And to the Pagans liberty afford ;
 I, for my part, upon myself depend,
 And trust for freedom solely from my sword.
 Grant then that I, while others shun the fight
 In slothful ease, to yon arena go,
 Not as thy champion, but as simple knight,
 And singly there do battle with the foe.'

XIV

'Altho' for worthier object,' answered he,
 'Thou shouldst reserve thy wrath and sword, still I
 Refuse thee not, if such thy pleasure be,
 The foe to single combat to defy.'
 He ceased. Arganté not a moment lost,
 But to a herald : 'To the camp repair,
 And to their chief, in hearing of the host,
 This my not unimportant challenge bear :

XV

'Say that a knight who holds it in disdain
 To crouch 'mid ramparts, and in trenches lie,
 Will in the open field with arms maintain,
 Should any dare the facts he states deny,
 That 'tis not zeal for faith the Frank inspires,
 Or honest end they seek in this campaign,
 But only ambitious, covetous desires,
 The thirst of rapine and the lust to reign.

XVI

‘And that he is not only against one
 Or two of yonder camp in arms arrayed,
 But proudly dares a third, fourth, fifth, come on,
 Be they of gentle or plebeian grade.
 Let him accord safe conduct if he will,
 And let the vanquished with the victor rest.’
 Arganté thus his orders gave. Meanwhile,
 The herald in his purple tabard dressed :

XVII

Soon as he did the royal presence reach
 Of pious Godfrey and his barons bold,
 He asked : ‘Do ye grant liberty of speech
 To me, a herald?’ ‘Ay, at once unfold,’
 Replied the chief, ‘without the slightest fear
 Thy proposition, whatsoever it be.’
 Rejoined the herald, ‘It will then appear
 If sweet or bitter prove my embassy.’

XVIII

He gave them then the challenge, and assumed
 A tone so haught, and used such lofty words,
 That at his language the fierce barons fumed,
 And clapped their angry hands upon their swords.
 The pious Godfrey, without waiting, said,
 ‘Your champion undertakes a hard emprise :
 I fain would think he may repent, nor need
 A fifth his bold presumption to chastise ;

XIX

‘But let him bide the proof ; I grant your knight
 Safe conduct here—an open field and fair ;
 With him shall one of our Crusaders fight,
 Nor vantage take—this solemnly I swear.’
 He ceased. The king at arms returned again
 By the same pathway he had trod before ;
 Nor did the swiftness of his steps restrain
 Till he the answer to Arganté bore.

XX

'Arm, arm, my lord,' he cried, 'nor use delay,
 Thy challenge is accepted: not alone
 The sovran knights are burning for the fray,
 But even those less noble and less known.
 I saw, while there, a thousand lowering brows;
 Grasping the sword I saw a thousand hands;
 A field secure the Christian chief allows.'
 This said, his arms the fiery Turk demands.

XXI

And girt them round him, in his haste to tread
 (Intolerant of sloth) the listed plain.
 To bold Clorinda then the monarch said,
 'Unjust it were he go while you remain,
 Take then a thousand spears to escort the knight,
 And guard his safety 'gainst unfair assault,
 But let him go alone, in equal fight;
 You at some distance off your party halt.'

XXII

This said, he ceased; and they, when armèd, bore
 Down from the rampired city to the plain,
 And fierce Arganté galloped on before,
 Sheathed in his wonted panoply of chain.
 'Twixt Pagan wall and Christian palisade,
 A level spot there was of ample size;
 Ample and smooth, it seemed on purpose made
 As tilting ground for knights to exercise.

XXIII

There singly he descended; there, in sight
 Of the assembled Franks, his station took,
 Proud of his frame, his courage, and his might,
 With threatening, insolent, imperious look.
 In Phlegra thus Enceladus appeared;
 Thus in the vale the giant Philistine:
 But still not many thee, Arganté, feared,
 As yet they had not felt that arm of thine.

XXIV

Tho' pious Godfrey had not yet selected
The one he deemed among so many best ;
All eyes towards Prince Tancredi were directed,
And upon him with deep affection rest.
All in esteeming him the best concurred,
Their every look a common choice implied.
Approval then in words more plain was heard,
Which with a nod the captain ratified.

XXV

To him already had the rest given way,
Nor longer did the pious chief defer ;
But said, ' Tancredi, thou hast my leave : away,
And curb the fury of yon blusterer.'
Appointed champion for the encounter, pride
Upon his flushed exultant features glowed.
' Bring me my helm and destrier,' he cried,
And flanked by thousands from the entrenchments rode.

XXVI

He had not reached the broad arena where
Arganté waited, when in warlike guise,
And in appearance no less strange than fair,
Clorinda loomed before his startled eyes.
Her surcoat looked a thousand times more white
Than sparkling snowdrift in some alpine glide ;
She wore her vizor up, and from the height
The full proportion of her form displayed.

XXVII

Nor saw Tancredi where Arganté still
Raised his portentous forehead to the skies,
But moved his destrier slowly towards the hill,
Fixing on her his rapt, enamoured eyes,
Then rooted stood, as if transformed to stone—
Outside, all ice, but lava at the core,
Sight he possessed not, save for her alone,
Nor seemed to think of the encounter more.

XXVIII

Arganté, who beheld no cavalier

Give sign of preparation for the fight,
Shouted: ' Desire of conflict led me here:

Who jousts with me or dares contend in might?'
Tancredi still was gazing on the maid

Like one entranced, nor seemed his words to hear,
When forward Otho spurred his fiery steed,
And was the first to pass the barrier.

XXIX

One of those Franks he was whose proudest aim
Was to do battle with the Pagan knight;

But to Tancredi had resigned his claim,
And followed him on horseback to the fight.

Now, seeing his feelings all absorbed elsewhere,
And that the combat he appeared to shun,

The impetuous stripling could no more forbear,
But seized the occasion, and dashed boldly on.

XXX

Not half so swift the tiger or fierce pard
Scours through the forest, as Prince Otho pressed
To strike the Saracen, who, on his guard,

Had to receive him placed his lance in rest.
This roused Tancredi, who till now supine,
Engrossed—abstracted, woke as from a trance,

Exclaiming loudly: ' Stay, the combat's mine!'
But all too far was Otho in advance.

XXXI

Whence halted he, live coals appeared his face,
And his proud heart with ire and shame to burst,
Deeming it vile defection and disgrace

That in the encounter he was not the first.
Meanwhile, the youth had struck in mid career

Arganté's helm, when spurring to the charge:
He, with a counter-stroke of his sharp spear,
Clove through his hauberk, having pierced his targe.

XXXII

The Christian fell. Tremendous was the shock
 That sent him flying from the saddle bow.
 But the huge Pagan, like some firm-set rock,
 Fell not, nor even reeled beneath the blow,
 Deriding him despitefully who lay
 Prone at his feet: 'Yield, slave, and let it be
 Sufficient for your future fame to say
 That you did once, rash boy, contend with me'

XXXIII

'No,' replied Otho, 'let what will befall,
 Never yield up my arms or trust will I;
 Let others make excuses for my fall,
 I will avenge it, or I here will die.'
 At this with ire Arganté grew inflamed,
 The sister Furies sparkled in his eyes;
 'Learn then by proof my valour,' he exclaimed,
 'Since thus my courteous offer you despise.'

XXXIV

Arganté spurred his destrier as he spoke,
 Forgetting laws of chivalry. Aside
 Prince Otho sprang, evading him, and struck
 The brawny Turk, when passing, in the side.
 So heavy, so impetuous was the stroke,
 That the steel issued bathed in crimson gore:
 But to what good, if it fresh fury woke,
 And left the victor puissant as before?

XXXV

His steed Arganté curbed, and turned him back;
 But with such lightning speed, that ere his foe
 Could guard himself against the fresh attack,
 He by the great collision was laid low—
 Trembled his limbs, faint, short his breath became,
 His features paled, his languid eyes swam round;
 Tremendous was the shock, with which his frame,
 Faint and exhausted, struck the unyielding ground.

XXXVI

Enfelsoned in his ire, Arganté made
His destrier trample on his breast : 'Tis meet
That thus the insolent are served,' he said,
' Like him who now lies prostrate at my feet.'
But generous Tancred could refrain no more,
And shocked at that unmerciful assault,
Resolved his valour, as it shone before,
Should shine and make atonement for his fault.

XXXVII

Forward he dashed, exclaiming : 'Soul abject,
That in your victories ev'n are infamous,
What title to renown do you expect
From act so bloody and so barbarous?
Your nature best with Arab ruffians suits,
And other savages of like degree ;
Go, daylight shun, and with your fellow brutes
In wastes and wilds indulge your cruelty.'

XXXVIII

The Pagan, little to endurance used,
Bit both his lips, consumed with rage and gall,
And tried to speak, but only sounds confused
Escaped, like cry of some wild animal ;
And as from cloud, in which it was immured,
Thunder bursts forth and passes, so expressed
Was the gruff growl of each half muttered word
That rumbled forth from his infuriate breast.

XXXIX

But when rude menace and insulting speech
Their pride had whetted and their anger steeled,
With like rapidity and vigour, each
Ground taking for a charge, his charger wheeled.
But here, O muse, refresh my voice ; inspire
Me with like force to theirs, that through thy charms
My song may not unworthily aspire,
But nobly echo back the clash of arms.

XL

In rest each warrior placed his knotty spear,
Its point directing upwards. Ne'er did spring
Of couchant tiger, nor the bound of deer,
Nor swoop of eagle on its swiftest wing,
Equal the speed with which Tancredi here,
And there Arganté, dashed to the assault ;
Their lances shivered when in mid career,
Whence sparks and splinters flew to heaven's blue vault.

XLI

Shook the firm earth, the distant hills resounded,
From the loud thunder of their crashing blows,
Whose force and desperate impetus rebounded
Lightly from off their haught, unblenching brows ;
So charged their steeds, cheered by their rider's tongue,
That falling down they could not rise up ; whence
The accomplished soldiers from their saddles sprung,
Unsheathed their swords, and stood upon defence.

XLII

To the other's look each warily moves his eye,
To blow his hand, to change of foot his feet.
Positions new, new guards, new feints they try ;
Wheel back, press forward, and at times retreat.
Here feign a stroke and strike not, but elsewhere
Down falls the sword on some unmenaced part ;
Now leave some point unguarded, as a snare
To lure the foe, art trying to baffle art.

XLIII

Protected ill by scimeter or targe,
Tancredi showed the Saracen his flank.
In rushed the Pagan, leaving in his charge,
His own left side uncovered ; the quick Frank
Not only parried by a dexterous blow
The ruthless weapon, but retorted hard ;
Nor, this accomplished, to retire was slow,
But backwards sprung and placed himself on guard.

XLIV

But when the fierce Circassian knight beheld
His own wet blood his glittering armour stain,
Struck with unwonted horror he outyelled,
By shame distracted and half mad from pain ;
Nor his infuriate impulse could restrain,
But with raised voice and sword, turned round to hit
The Christian knight, and wounded was again
Just where the arm is to the shoulder knit.

XLV

As in some alpine wood a savage bear,
Who feels an arrow rankling in her side,
Infuriate, springs upon the hunter's spear,
At perils and at death unterrified ;
Such the impetuous Saracen became
As wound on wound and shame on shame augments ;
While hopes for vengeance so his soul inflame,
He scorns all dangers and forgets defence.

XLVI

To reckless courage joining strength immense,
And to untiring vigour rage unslaked,
His sword he brandished with such violence
That the heavens lightened and the mountains quaked.
Nor had himself Prince Tancred time to shield
Or scarcely breathe—much less to strike a blow,
Or shelter find that might protection yield
'Gainst the hot haste and fury of his foe.

XLVII

Collected in himself he waits in vain
Till the fierce tempest of his strokes subsides,
He parries now, now swiftly o'er the plain
In skilful circles to avoid him glides ;
But since unceasing is the Pagan lord,
At length his passions carry him away ;
Lashed into fury, he too whirls his sword
And doth the same mad violence display.

K

XLVIII

Judgment and skill by rage are overborne,
 As frenzy fires and doth their force sustain ;
 Ne'er falls the sword but cloven through or torn
 Is mail or corslet, steel ne'er strikes in vain ;
 Strown is the ground with arms, the arms with gore,
 The gore with sweat : in that infuriate war
 Lightning in flash, loud thunder in the roar,
 Bolts in descent, their gleaming broad swords are.

XLIX

In deep suspense the rival armies hung
 On that most novel and appalling sight,
 Now buoyed by hope, now by misgiving wrung,
 They watched the changes of that desperate fight ;
 No sign was made, nor did the tongue express
 The deep anxiety on either part,
 But silent all remained and motionless :
 The only motion was the beating heart.

L

Both were exhausted now, and perhaps the foes
 Had to untimely end, still battling, come,
 But that so black the shades of night uprose
 That things ev'n near were hidden in their gloom.
 At this from either side a herald sought
 To part them, which at length they did : the one
 Aridos, the other Pindoro, who brought
 The challenge, deemed a wise and prudent man.

LI

They dared their peaceful sceptres interpose
 Between the combatants' infuriate swords
 With that security, which ev'n 'mid foes
 The law of nations to their craft affords.
 ' Brave soldiers, ye, 'twas thus the latter spake,
 ' Have gained like fame and are of equal might ;
 Cease then the combat, nor unnatural, break
 The calm repose and purpose of the night.

LII

'The time for travail is while shines the sun,
But all creation hath repose at night,
The generous heart despising trophies won
When darkness shrouds them: the Circassian knight
Straightway replied: 'To quit this bloody fray
Ill-pleased I am, even for these shades obscure,
And should prefer the evidence of day;
But will this Christian his return insure?'

LIII

'Wilt thou, too, promise,' Prince Tancredi cried,
'Here to return and bring thy prisoner back?
As otherwise I can't consent to bide
Another season to conclude the attack.'
Both swore; the heralds, who selected were
To appoint the time the contest to renew
(To give them time their forces to repair),
Fixed the sixth morning, and at once withdrew.

LIV

The frightful combat left profoundly impressed
A sense of consternation and surprise
In every Christian, every Pagan breast;
It seemed to haunt their horror-stricken eyes:
Of nought was spoken, save the nerve and might
That in it either combatant displayed;
But to whom give the honours of the fight,
Was a moot subject of opinion made;

LV

Uncertain what succession would entail
The bloody horrors of that hard-fought field,
If fury would o'er chivalry prevail,
Or recklessness to real courage yield.
But more than all who apprehensive are,
Painful suspense the fair Erminia rends,
Since on the issue of uncertain war
A life far dearer than her own depends.

LVI

She was the daughter of Cassano, who
Dominion held o'er Antioch of yore,
And when it fell before the Frank, she too,
With other spoil, fell into Tancred's power ;
But he behaved with such fine courtesy,
That at his hands no wrong she did sustain,
And 'mid the ruin of her country, she
Was honoured as tho' still she were its queen.

LVII

That chivalrous and noble cavalier
Gave her her freedom, honoured her, obeyed,
Leaving, with all that she esteemed most dear,
Her wealth and jewels to the royal maid ;
Who, in his youthful person having found
A princely soul combined with beauty rare,
Fell deep in love ; who firmer knot ne'er bound
Than that with which he now encircled her.

LVIII

Thus still in slavery her soul remained,
Tho' to her body freedom was restored,
And deeply was the enamoured princess pained
To leave her prison and her darling lord ;
But sovran modesty, which ne'er should be
Neglected by magnanimous haughty dame,
Forced her to fly, and refuge seek, whence she
With her aged mother unto Salem came,

LIX

A friendly country, and was there received
By the fell tyrant of the Hebrew state,
But soon of her dear mother was bereaved,
And mourned in orphan weeds her hapless fate.
Still grief, though rankling 'neath Death's keenest dart,
Could not, nor ev'n could banishment, remove
The amorous longings of her stricken heart,
Or quench the flame of her deep-rooted love.

LX

She loved, she burned in secret, and became
So sad and hopeless—wretched girl—that she
Within her bosom fed the hidden flame,
Far less of hope, alas ! than memory.
Since the more stifled, all the greater strength
Her burning thoughts and smouldering fire possessed.
To Salem's walls Tancredi came at length,
And woke fresh hopes in her despondent breast.

LXI

The others, panic-struck, beheld with awe
Those fierce, unconquered legions burst in sight ;
But she cleared up her clouded brow and saw
The haughty troops with ill-repressed delight,
And many fond inquiring glances threw
To try the dear one 'mid that host to see ;
Oft sought in vain, oft recognized him too,
Exclaiming eagerly, 'That—that is he !'

LXII

In the imperial palace, near the wall,
An ancient tower o'erlooks the wide champaign,
From whose high top one can distinguish all
The Christian camp, the mountain and the plain.
There from the dawn's first blushes, until damp
And gloomy night obscured the world, her eyes
Moveless she fixed upon the Christian camp,
Her thoughts communed with and outpoured her sighs ;

LXIII

Thence saw the fight, and was so deeply moved
As she its changes watched with bated breath,
That her heart seemed to whisper : 'Thy beloved
Is he that stands there in the risk of death.'
Thus full of doubt and dread for her adored,
She did each turn of the encounter feel ;
Each time the Pagan raised his cruel sword,
Within her soul she felt the griding steel.

LXIV

But when she heard the truth, and also heard
 That to the sword they must again appeal,
 By such strange terror was her bosom stirred,
 That into ice she felt her blood congeal.
 Now tears in secret the sad maiden shed,
 Now sobs ill-stifled told her heart-felt care :
 Pale, woebegone, from fright and grief half dead,
 She looked the incarnation of despair.

LXV

With dreadful images her fancy teems,
 Which her repose disquiet and affright ;
 Sleep is far worse than death, since in her dreams
 Such monstrous visions it presents : her knight,
 Her darling knight, she pictures in her mind,
 Mangled and bloody ; his faint voice she hears
 Her aid imploring ; when she wakes to find
 Her eyes and bosom bathed in real tears.

LXVI

Nor was it alone of future ills the dread
 That with such painful movement stirred her breast ;
 But grief for wounds that he already had,
 Prevents her soul obtaining any rest.
 And the false rumours that around are rife
 The distant unknown facts so magnify,
 That on the very verge of failing life
 She sees the sick and languid warrior lie.

LXVII

And since her mother had to her revealed
 The secret virtue that each herb contains,
 And by what potent charms all hurts are healed
 In wounded members, and assuaged their pains
 (An art which from old custom in that land,
 It seems king's daughters jealously preserve) ;
 She wished to cure his wounds with her own hand,
 And to restore the dear one's strength and nerve.

LXVIII

To cure her dear Tancredi she desired,
 And yet was fated to relieve his foe ;
 And for a moment her dark thoughts conspired
 With noxious herbs to poison him ; but no—
 Her virgin hands recoiled from all foul arts,
 And she forbore such treacherous means to use,
 But wished at least within her heart of hearts,
 For him her simples might their virtue lose.

LXIX

Nor dreaded she to pass through hostile hordes,
 Since as a pilgrim she had often seen
 The fire of battle and the flash of swords ;
 And her past life so sorely tried had been,
 That now from habit her soft gentle mind
 Against its nature had intrepid grown,
 Nor was so easily to fear inclined,
 Or start at dangers where existed none.

LXX

But fearless Love had, more than any cause,
 All terror banished from her tender breast :
 She deemed not poisonous snakes, nor sharpest claws
 Of Libyan lions, could her steps arrest ;
 But still, if all regardless of her life,
 To guard her fame it did her sex behove,
 Since two great foes maintained a doubtful strife
 Within her heart : here Honour, and there Love.

LXXI

'O gentle virgin,' thus the former said,
 'Who hast till now my rigid laws observed,
 Reflect how I, when thou wert captive made,
 Thy mind and limbs in chastity preserved ;
 And wilt thou, free, with maiden honour part,
 So closely guarded in captivity ?
 Ah, who has roused such feelings in thy heart ?
 What thoughts mislead, what hopes inveigle thee ?

LXXII

'Dost deem the worth of chastity so low,
 And maiden modesty so little prize,
 As nightly paramour 'mid strangers go
 And read thy shame in their contemptuous eyes?
 Whence the disdainful conqueror may say,
 Thy royal mind left with thy royalty,
 Let others take such vulgar common prey,
 I yield thee up, thou art not worthy me.'

LXXIII

The sophist Love upon the other part
 By these allurements led her fancy on :
 'Not born, fair girl, of savage bear thou art,
 Nor sprung from rugged and unfeeling stone,
 That Cupid's torch and quiver thou shouldst spurn,
 Or fly the soft inthralment of his flame ;
 Thy heart's not made of adamant, to turn
 His darts aside, or deem his calling shame.

LXXIV

'Go then where'er Desire allureth thee—
 Unkind perhaps thy conqueror appears?
 Thou little know'st his sympathies, how he
 Grieves with thy grief, and weepeth with thy tears.
 'Tis thou art unkind, that with such sluggish will
 Movest to tend thy love, who scarce survives ;
 Tancredi sinks, and yet thou sittest still
 To watch, ungrateful, over others' lives.

LXXV

'Yes ! heal Arganté that his murderous blade
 The readier death of thy deliverer be ;
 Thus were thy heavy obligations paid,
 Thus were returned his courtesies to thee !
 But can it be thou dost not feel the vice
 And degradation of that office so,
 That its mere horror should alone suffice
 To wing thy flight from thy friend's mortal foe ?

LXXVI

'But on the other side, the task how grand !
How great would be thy joy and thy delight
To lay thy soothing sympathetic hand
Upon the bosom of the valorous knight !
And to behold his cheeks, now pale and wan,
Regain their roses 'neath thy care, and view
That noble beauty, now so nearly gone,
Its former bloom, as if thy gift, renew !

LXXVII

'Then thou wouldst be a partner of his fame,
His glory share, so lofty and renowned ;
Wouldst bear in marriage his illustrious name,
And loyal love thy happiness had crowned,
Then, pointed out and honoured, wouldst repair
To lovely Italy's enchanting plains
(Midst Latin wives and Latin mothers), where
True valour lives and true religion reigns.'

LXXVIII

Flattered by such fond hopes, (deluded maid !)
She pictured to herself joy most intense ;
But in a thousand doubts involved, oft weighed
How she securely could depart from thence,
Since sentries on the alert patrolled around
The palace, and upon the walls kept guard ;
Nor, in such risk of war, was ever found
Without grave cause a single gate unbarred.

LXXIX

Erminia with the lovely Amazon
Was oft accustomed to prolong her stay ;
Together saw them the declining sun,
Together saw them the ascending day,
And when he had his daily circuit run,
Their rest sometimes a single bed supplied,
Nor any thought, except of love alone,
Did either maiden from the other hide.

LXXX

This fair Erminia did to none impart,
 And if at times Clorinda heard her mourn,
 To other cause she ascribed her heavy heart :
 It seemed as though she wept her fate forlorn.
 Each to the other without let could come,
 So close their friendship was ; and never closed
 Against Erminia was Clorinda's room,
 Whether she had gone forth or there reposed.

LXXXI

One day she went, when in another part
 Clorinda was, and paused in deep suspense,
 Revolving in herself the means and art
 By which to escape in secrecy from thence ;
 And while her thoughts in restless wild alarms
 By various plans distracted were, she spied,
 Suspended from aloft, her glittering arms
 And snowy cloak : she saw them and she sighed.

LXXXII

And sighing said, in admiration lost,
 ' How happy is that brave intrepid fair !
 Oh, how I envy her ! but not the boast
 And woman's pride of loveliness so rare ;
 No envious cell confines her valour, no !
 Nor cumbrous robes retard the heroic dame :
 She dons her arms, and if she wish to go,
 She goes ; no fear restrains her and no shame.

LXXXIII

' Ah, why did Heaven and partial Nature fail
 Me to endow with such stout limbs and breast,
 That I might too my woman's robe and veil
 Exchange for corselet and for nodding crest ?
 Then neither storm, nor rain, nor heat, nor cold
 Had stopped me from going armèd to the camp,
 Attended, or alone and uncontrolled,
 Or by Apollo's rays or Dian's lamp.

LXXXIV

'Then thou hadst not been, Saracen abhorred,
 The first to battle with yon cavalier,
 Since I had sprung to meet my darling lord,
 Who now perhaps my captive prisoner were.
 Then slavery's chain—but oh ! how sweet and light—
 Around him I, his loving foe, had thrown,
 And by the bonds that kept him prisoner, might
 Have felt relieved the burden of my own.

LXXXV

'Or were my side pierced by his gentle hand,
 Or by him bared again my stricken heart,
 At least his cruel, though unconscious brand,
 Had cured the wound inflicted by Love's dart ;
 Then had my mind and wearied body gained
 Eternal rest, and pitying my doom,
 The victor perhaps had to my ashes deigned
 The tribute of his tears and of a tomb.

LXXXVI

'But ah ! I wish impossibilities,
 And lose myself amid mad thoughts in vain.
 Shall I then here in this sad frightened guise,
 As one unworthy of my rank, remain ?
 No, no, not I ! Confide, my heart, and dare ;
 Why should I not for once take arms, and try
 For a short time their heavy load to bear,
 Though tender and effeminate am I ?

LXXXVII

'Yes, yes I will. Love casteth out all fear,
 And on the weakest sovran strength bestows,
 Inspired by it, ev'n the unwarlike deer
 Is armed with ardour, and to battle goes.
 But not to war I go : these arms so prized
 For an ingenious fraud I would procure ;
 I want to feign Clorinda, since disguised
 Under her likeness, my departure is sure.

LXXXVIII

'Nor will the sentries of the portals be
 So bold as her commands to disobey;
 I think and think, nor other mode can see;
 This seems the only practicable way.
 Now Fortune, aid my innocent deceit,
 And Love that didst inspire me with the ways;
 Well suited is the hour for my retreat,
 While with the king Clorinda still delays.'

LXXXIX

Thus she determined, urged and goaded on
 By Love's mad frenzy, nor a moment wastes,
 But from Clorinda's chamber to her own
 To carry off the stolen armour hastes;
 Which was not hard, since each attendant maid
 Left as she came, and she remained alone;
 Her theft was screened, too, by the friendly shade
 Which night round lovers and round thieves had thrown.

XC

Then seeing the heavens, that erst some stars displayed,
 Put on more black and sombre an attire,
 No longer she her purposed flight delayed,
 But summoned secretly her faithful squire,
 And her beloved and confidential maid,
 To whom her project she revealed in part;
 She told the object of her flight, but said
 That other cause compelled her to depart.

XCI

With bustling haste prepared the loyal squire,
 What he considered for their wants most meet.
 Erminia then cast off her rich attire,
 Whose flowing skirt descended to her feet,
 And in her unadorned simplicity
 Looked, past all credence, elegant and light;
 Nor was there one assistance gave, save she
 Selected as companion of her flight.

XCII

The unyielding steel's incumbent weight offends
 Her delicate white neck and golden hair,
 Her tender arm beneath the burden bends
 Of a huge shield it has not strength to bear.
 Refulgent thus in glittering arms, the maid
 Constrained herself to assume a martial air ;
 Love, near her, smiled, rememb'ring how he made
 Alcides once the weeds of women wear.

XCIII

Oh, with what great fatigue she now sustains
 The excessive weight, how move her footsteps slow ;
 As for support upon her maid she leans,
 Who doth before, to give assistance, go !
 But love and hope her spirits reinforce,
 And to her burdened limbs fresh vigour bring,
 So that they reach where wait the squire and horse,
 And with all haste into the saddle spring.

XCIV

Disguised they go, and purposely repair
 Thro' the most lone and unfrequented ways,
 Yet still with many meet ; the shadowy air
 From flashing steel on all sides is ablaze.
 Still none their progress venture to arrest,
 But yielding up the pathway, backward fall,
 Since the white mantle and the dreaded crest,
 Ev'n in the dark are recognized by all.

XCV

Though this in part diminishes her doubt,
 She cannot all solicitude dissolve ;
 Apprehensive in the end to be found out,
 She feels the terror of her rash resolve :
 But at the gate arrived, she checks her dread,
 The guard deluding who that post defends.
 ' I am Clorinda ! ope the gate,' she said,
 ' Me on important service the king sends.'

XCVI

So like Clorinda's, her soft voice's charms
 Facilitate the trembling girl's deceit ;
 (Another maid, not knowing use of arms,
 Thus armed and mounted, who would dream to meet ?)
 Whence her commands the sentry obeyed, while she
 Swift with her escort through the gateway sped,
 And then, descending for security,
 Through the vale's long and devious cross-roads fled.

XCVII

But when Erminia found herself at last
 Deep in the lonely valley, she drew rein,
 Nor feared, the first risks having safely passed,
 That aught could now impede her or detain.
 Then thought of what had not occurred before
 To her rapt fancy ; access she perceived
 Would still be very difficult, much more
 Than in love's fevered transports she believed.

XCVIII

She saw what utter folly she had shown,
 In going through bitter foes in warlike guise ;
 Moreover she desired to pass unknown,
 And first be seen by the beloved eyes.
 To him with frank unsullied modesty
 She wished to come an unexpected guest ;
 Whence, made more cautious by such scruples, she
 Paused, and her squire to this effect addressed :

XCIX

'Thou must, O faithful, my precursor be,
 But thou must be both diligent and wise.
 Go to the camp, and find one on some plea
 To introduce thee where Tancredi lies ;
 Tell him that hither hath a lady flown,
 Who brings him health, and doth for peace apply :
 Peace, since to war Love urges me alone,
 Whence he may health experience, solace I ;

C

‘ And has in him such trustful lively faith,
 As at his hands to feel no shame, no scorn.
 Nor breathe but this ; if more he questioneth,
 Feign ignorance, and hasten thy return ;
 Meanwhile to yonder wood I will retire,
 Since it appeareth a secure retreat.’
 Thus spake the lady, and that loyal squire
 Went, as though wingèd were his nimble feet.

CI

And managed so adroitly his career,
 That thro’ the intrenchments he was led, and took
 Her message to the couchant cavalier,
 Who heard its import with delighted look.
 Then, leaving him revolving o’er and o’er
 A thousand wild conjectures in his mind,
 Back to his mistress courteous answer bore,
 That she could safe and secret ingress find.

CII

Impatient she meanwhile, to whom appears
 An age each moment, in impetuous mood
 The footsteps counts that she in fancy hears :
 ‘ He reaches—enters—now return he should.’
 To her it seems, for which she frets, that he
 Uses less speed than wont ; and in suspense,
 Gallops at length to an acclivity
 Where a first view she catches of the tents.

CIII

’Twas Night, who over the still sleeping world,
 Robed in her starry veil, unclouded shone ;
 Already shed her luminous rays, impearled
 With frost of living pearl, the rising moon ;
 Her flame exhaling, the enamoured maid
 In fancy soared to those bright realms above ;
 And the dumb fields and friendly silence made
 The confidants of her devoted love.

CIV

And said, while gazing on the camp below,
 'How lovely in mine eyes ye tents appear!
 The sweet refreshing airs that from you blow
 Fresh comfort waft as I approach you near.
 So to my stormy and eventful life
 May Heaven afford some respite, some release,
 As but from you I seek it: 'mid the strife
 Of arms alone, it seems, I meet with peace.

CV

'Receive me then, and in you let me find
 That pity which Love promised to afford,
 And which when to captivity consigned,
 Was ever shown me by my gentle lord.
 Favoured by you, I seek not to make war,
 My throne and royal honours to regain;
 Reft of my sceptre, I am happier far
 To serve as slave with you, than elsewhere reign.'

CVI

Thus spake Erminia, who but little thought
 What sad misfortune was in store for her.
 She was so placed that the clear moonbeams caught
 Her burnished armour, which at every stir
 Reflected back the radiant sheen around,
 So that afar was seen its brilliancy,
 And the great tigress on the silver ground
 So brightly sparkled that all said, "'Tis she.'

CVII

And as Fate willed it, near the expectant fair
 Was stationed a large force in ambuscade,
 Whose leaders two Italian brothers were,
 Alcander this, that Polypherne, who laid
 In wait to cut off all the Turks' supplies
 Of sheep and oxen to the city sent;
 And if her esquire passed their watchful eyes,
 'Twas that he took a round and swifter went.

CVIII

The youthful Polypherne, whose sire had been
Beneath his eyes by bold Clorinda slain,
Having the white emblazoned armour seen,
Felt sure he saw that warrior fair again,
And against her urged on his ambushed band,
Unable his heart's impulse to restrain
(Since, when enraged, he lost all self-command),
Shouting, 'Thou art dead !' and launched his spear in
vain.

CIX

As when a hind inflamed with burning thirst,
In search of limpid living water goes
To where from rocks pellucid torrents burst,
Or 'twixt umbrageous banks a river flows ;
Then meets with hounds as her tired frame she tries
To cool in summer shade and crystal clear,
Quick doubles back, and like an arrow flies,
Fatigue and thirst forgotten in her fear ;

CX

So she, who thought Love's burning thirst, which glows
For ever fiercest in the gentlest breast,
To quench in kind reception, and repose
Her mind with such anxiety opprest,
Now made of such impediments aware,
The deadly menace, and the clank of steel,
Herself, her love, abandons in despair
And her fleet palfrey pricks with timid heel.

CXI

Away Erminia flies ; with wingèd feet
Her destrier flies ; the other damsel too
Follows her flying mistress's retreat,
Nor fails fierce Polypherno to pursue ;
When from the tents, lo ! came the squire in sight,
Bringing the news, but bringing it in vain.
Perplexed he joined the others in their flight,
And fear dispersed them o'er the wide champaign.

L

CXII

But his more prudent brother, tho' he, too,
Had her he deemed to be Clorinda seen,
Since he was farther off, did not pursue,
But kept in cover of his ambushed screen ;
And to the camp a herald sent to say
That 'twas not beasts nor fleecy flocks they viewed,
But that Clorinda was the frightened prey
Whom his brave brother Polypherne pursued.

CXIII

Nor did he think, nor was it like, that she
Who not mere soldier but a leader was,
To sally forth at such an hour would be
Tempted, without some grave and urgent cause ;
That he would execute his lord's commands,
Who thus advised could judge of the events.
Such was the news that reached the Christian bands,
And first was heard among the Latin tents.

CXIV

Tancred, whose heart already hung in doubt
From the first message, when this last was known,
Thinks, ' Ah, perhaps she kindly seeks me out,
And has endangered for my life her own :'
Flings on a portion of his arms in haste,
Vaults on his steed, and silently departs ;
And following up the footmarks freshly traced,
Swift as an arrow from the encampment darts.

CANTO VII.

I

THRO' the thick covert of an ancient wood,
Erminia meanwhile by her horse was led ;
To hold the rein her hand no longer could,
And she appeared half living and half dead,
As thro' a thousand paths her untired steed
Bore her at his wild will. At last, from view
Of all she disappeared, and little need
'Twere now for ev'n the swiftest to pursue.

II

As after lengthened and fatiguing chase,
The panting hounds return in downcast mood,
Foiled of their prey, of whom they have lost all trace,
In the thick covert of some sheltering wood ;
Such signs, on their return, of rage and shame
Were in the faces of the Christians viewed.
Bewildered, still fled on the affrighted dame,
Nor once turned round to see if still pursued.

III

All night she fled, and next day's weary round
Wandered without a plan, without a guide ;
Nor saw but tears, nor heard the slightest sound,
Save what the outburst of her plaints supplied.
But when Apollo had unyoked his team
From his gold car, and 'neath the horizon sank,
She reached the noble Jordan's sparkling stream,
And there lay down exhausted on its bank.

IV

No food the fair one takes ; her sole repast
 Misfortune's cud, she only thirsts for tears ;
 But Sleep, that doth his sweet oblivion cast
 O'er wretched mortals, comforts them and cheers,
 Extends his soothing soporific wing,
 And in forgetfulness her senses steeps ;
 Tho' Cupid ceases not her breast to wring,
 Her peace disturbing, even while she sleeps.

V

She slept, till wakened by the dulcet call
 Of twittering birds, that hailed the break of day ;
 Heard the shrubs rustle, the crisped river brawl,
 And breath of morn with flowers and waters play.
 Then opes her languid eyes, nor aught perceives,
 But solitary huts of shepherds near ;
 Then deems she hears a voice among the leaves,
 That back recalls the bitter sigh and tear.

VI

But as she weeps, her plaints are broken by
 Clear tones, that seem, nay, truly do proceed
 From pastoral voices blent in harmony
 With music of the uncultivated reed.
 Thither she goes, and one with hoary locks
 Sees seated there, the pleasant shades among,
 Engaged in weaving baskets near his flocks,
 And listening while three little children sung.

VII

The sudden apparition of her arms
 Their simple souls affrighted, since so rare ;
 Whence, reassuring them from all alarms,
 Erminia showed her eyes and golden hair.
 'O fortunate, Heaven-belovèd folk,' she cries,
 'Your innocent tasks continue, since no wrong
 These arms intend against the exercise
 Or of your craft, or of your simple song.

VIII

'But tell me, father, how, when all around
The flames of war spread terror through the land,
Thou hast so peaceful an asylum found,
Nor fear'st incursion of marauding band?'
'Here, son,' he answered, 'free from wrongs and scorn,
My family and flocks have aye remained;
No clank of steel, nor blast of martial horn,
Has yet the calm of this lone spot profaned.

IX

'Or be it God's grace that hallows and sustains
The innocent shepherd's inoffensive lot,
Or as fierce lightning scorns the lowly plains
And vents its fury on the highest spot,
So foreign swords, disdainful of the poor,
Unsheathed alone against great kings you see;
Nor can a greedy soldiery allure
Our abject and disparaged poverty.

X

'Abject to others, but to me how dear!
Who without wealth and power contented rest;
No greedy ambition, no voracious care,
Dwells ever now within my tranquil breast.
My thirst I quench in the stream that runneth by,
Nor fear that it with poison is imbrued,
My little garden and these flocks supply
My frugal table with unpurchased food.

XI

'Few are our wishes, and our wants but few,
Whence life for us is easy to sustain.
These are my sons, whom I point out to you;
They tend my flocks, no servants I maintain.
Thus in secluded cloister I abide,
Watching the deer and nimble goats bound by,
The fish in this translucent river glide,
And birds unfold their plumage to the sky.

XII

'Time was—when, in life's dreamy spring-time, man
 Most doting is—that other aims I had :
 I sdeigned to pasture flocks and herds, and ran
 From this sweet spot, where I was born and bred,
 And made my way to royal Memphis, where
 I ev'n found service in the imperial fort,
 And tho' mere keeper of the gardens, there
 I saw and knew the vices of a court.

XIII

'By daring hope's seductive impulse led,
 I long endured that which I hated most ;
 But when the flowers of life's sweet spring had fled,
 My spirit bow'd—my expectations crost—
 I wept the calm of this low life, and sighing
 O'er my lost peace, exclaimed, O courts, farewell !
 And to these woods from their false pleasures flying,
 Here in contented true enjoyment dwell.'

XIV

As thus he spoke, intent Erminia hung
 Upon his lips' sweet accents, for in part
 The sage discourse of his experienced tongue
 Allayed the storm of her distracted heart.
 Whence she resolved, in her unaided strait,
 In that remote seclusion to sojourn,
 And stay till Fortune should facilitate
 The means (the longed-for means) of her return.

XV

Whence she replied, 'Old man, how fortunate
 The ordeal of misfortune to have proved ;
 Ah, may Heaven grudge thee not thy happy state
 If by compassion for my sorrows moved !
 Receive me then, if merciful thou art,
 Nor the sweet shelter of thy roof refuse ;
 It may be, 'mid these tranquil shades, my heart
 Some portion of its death-like weight may lose.

XVI

' If gold and jewels, which the world adores
 As if its god, find favour in thy sight,
 Thou canst, since of them I have ample stores,
 Content and glut thee to thy heart's delight.'
 To her bright eyes at this her sorrow rose,
 In drops of crystal that fell trickling down ;
 She half revealed her fortunes. At her woes
 His tears the shepherd mingled with her own.

XVII

And instigated by paternal zeal,
 Her welcomed and consoled in her despair,
 And to his wife, whom Heaven had taught to feel
 For others' sorrows, led the royal fair ;
 Who clothed herself in peasant's rude disguise,
 And in coarse turban her gold tresses bound,
 Tho' every movement of her limbs and eyes
 Her for a tenant of the woods disowned.

XVIII

Her noble look no garment could disguise,
 Nor her refined and stately manner spoil ;
 Her innate dignity all recognize,
 Ev'n through the movements of her lowly toil.
 At morn she leads to pasture in the shaws,
 At eve to fold brings back the lowing herds,
 From their coarse teats the milky treasure draws,
 Which, whisking round, she presses into curds.

XIX

Oft, when the flocks lay stretched beneath the shade,
 To shun the heat of the sun's noontide flame,
 On beech or laurel the enamoured maid
 In countless forms inscribed the one loved name.
 Thus of a thousand trees the graven barks
 Her ill-starred passion's hapless issue told ;
 And as each time she saw the tell-tale marks,
 Down her fair cheeks the pearly tear-drops rolled.

XX

'Ah, friendly trees,' exclaimed the weeping maid,
 'Preserve this tale of one who loved too well,
 That, should it hap beneath your grateful shade
 Some fond and faithful swain should ever dwell,
 He in his heart may feel compassion burn
 At the sad record of my woes, and cry,
 Alas! what cruel, what unjust return,
 Gave Fate and Love to such fidelity!

XXI

'It ev'n may chance, if kindly heavens attend
 To mortals' earnest and affectionate prayers,
 That to this forest he at times may wend,
 He who perhaps for me but little cares;
 And his eyes casting on the silent tomb
 Where the remains of poor Erminia lie,
 May tardy tribute to her martyrdom
 Pay, in one pitying tear, one passing sigh.

XXII

'Whence if in life my heart has wretched been,
 Death may my spirit with some bliss endow,
 And my cold ashes that sweet solace glean,
 Which to enjoy is not permitted now.'
 From her eyes' teeming founts sad tears she shed,
 As the deaf trunks thus fondly she addressed.
 Meanwhile away from her by Fortune led,
 Still in pursuit of her, Tancredi pressed.

XXIII

And following up the footprints freshly made,
 His course directed to a neighbouring wood;
 But there so dark, so dense fell down the shade
 From the thick horrent foliage, that he could
 No longer, 'mid the increasing gloom, select
 The recent footmarks, and in doubt proceeds,
 Listening with ear attentive, to detect
 The clank of armour or the tramp of steeds.

XXIV

Ev'n did the breath of evening faintly shake
The aspen branches of the elm or beech,
Or did a bird or beast but stir the brake,
That little noise he strove at once to reach.
At last he issued from the wood, and erred
Thro' paths unknown, led by the moon's bright beam,
Towards a faint sound he in the distance heard,
Until he reached the spot from whence it came.

XXV

Arriving where, in lavish overflow,
Clear waters burst forth from the living rock,
And to a river grown, leaped down below,
Thro' banks of emerald green, with noisy shock.
Here he dejected halts, and pensive calls :
He calls ; nor aught save Echo's voice replies.
Meanwhile he sees from out her orient halls
The dawn in white and vermeil beauty rise.

XXVI

Downcast, he groans, and rails in his despair
'Gainst Heaven, which his great happiness denies,
And for his mistress doth loud vengeance swear,
Should she receive the slightest injuries.
He then decided to retrace his way
Campwards, tho' knowing not what course to steer ;
Since he remembered that approached the day
When he should meet the Egyptian cavalier.

XXVII

He left ; and while 'mid cross roads wandering,
Heard the approach of horse, near and more near ;
At length perceived from out the valley spring
One that did like a courier appear.
A whip he shook, and from his shoulders hung
A horn that reached his flank, as is our mode.
Tancredi asked him, in the Syrian tongue,
To the Crusaders' camp the shortest road.

XXVIII

He in Italian : 'Thither am I bent,
 Despatched post haste by Boëmond.' Deceived,
 Him Tancred followed, deeming he was sent
 By his great uncle, and the cheat believed.
 At length they reached a stagnant lake, amid
 Whose poisonous waters a proud castle lay,
 Just at the moment when, his glory hid
 In the broad nest of night, down sank the day.

XXIX

Arrived, the courier wound his bugle horn,
 And straight was seen a drawbridge to descend.
 'Here thou canst tarry till to-morrow morn,
 If,' said he, 'Latin, or the Christian's friend.
 From the fierce Pagan Count Cosenza took
 This island fort, not three days since it fell.'
 The place, as there Tancredi fixed his look,
 Its site and art had made impregnable.

XXX

A doubt he felt that some mysterious snare
 Might lurk concealed within so strong a place ;
 But since accustomed risks of death to dare,
 He expressed it not, nor showed it by his face :
 Where'er by choice or fortune led, the knight
 Alone for safety on his arm relies ;
 Still for another fray his promised plight
 Him rendered loth to any new emprise.

XXXI

He therefore paused before the citadel,
 In a broad meadow on the other side,
 Where the curved drawbridge, stretching over, fell,
 And tho' invited, followed not his guide ;
 When, lo ! on it a belted cavalier,
 Of savage and exasperated look,
 Who with his right hand grasped a naked spear,
 In this despiteful, threatening language spoke :

XXXII

'O thou that com'st from fancy of thine own,
 Or led by Fortune to Armida's lands,
 Renounce all thoughts of flight, thy arms lay down.
 And in her fetters place thy captive hands ;
 Enter within her closely-guarded wall,
 Nor hope again to see the light of day
 (This the condition she prescribes to all),
 Tho' years roll by, though thy brown locks turn grey,

XXXIII

'Unless thou swear her forces to augment,
 And march 'gainst those that bear Christ's hated name.'
 His eyes on him who spoke Tancredi bent,
 And speech and arms both recognized : the same
 False Gascon renegade, Rambaldo, who
 Fled with Armida, and for her became
 Pagan and, sole of all the true, untrue,
 The rites defended of that impious dame.

XXXIV

The pious soldier blushed with holy scorn
 As thus he answered him : ' Vile traitor, know
 I am that Tancred who for aye have borne
 The sword for Christ, and am His foeman's foe ;
 And thro' His grace His rebels have subdued,
 As when we close in combat thou shalt see ;
 Since this right hand, with Heaven's own wrath indued,
 Selected is for vengeance upon thee.'

XXXV

The apostate soldier at that glorious name
 Confounded stood ; the colour left his cheek ;
 Yet still concealing his alarm and shame,
 He cried : ' Why dost thou thy destruction seek ?
 Here, wretched, vainly will thy strength be spent,
 Low in the dust will thy haught head be sent,
 And as a present to Prince Godfrey sent,
 Unless I am changed from what I have ever been.'

XXXVI

Thus spoke the Pagan, and since light of day
Was so obscured that one could scarcely see,
Such numerous lamps blazed forth around, that they
The air illumined with great brilliancy ;
The castle shone as on the stage appears
Amid nocturnal pomp the glowing scene,
And from a lofty part Armida hears,
And sees, while she remains herself unseen.

XXXVII

Meanwhile prepared the noble cavalier
His arms and courage for the angry fight,
And vaulted off his feeble destrier,
His foeman seeing on foot. In act to smite
Rambaldo came, unsheathed his falchion shone,
And clad he was in armature entire.
To meet him dashed irate Tancredi on,
With voice of thunder, and with eyes of fire.

XXXVIII

That locked in armour, moved in circles wide,
And fenced and feigned and simulated blows ;
This tho' his limbs were faint and weary, tried
To approach and with his treacherous foeman close,
And still continued, as he still drew back,
To follow on in hot and eager chase,
And thundering, forcing, pressing the attack,
His sword oft drave at the apostate's face ;

XXXIX

But more than elsewhere struck impetuously
Where Nature has the parts most vital set ;
Aye aggravating fear by injury,
And blows by many an imperious threat.
Here, there, his lissome limbs upon the field
The nimble Gascon turned, to avoid each blow,
Seeking with sword or with uplifted shield
To ward the strokes of his infuriate foe.

XL

But he was not so ready in defence,
As was the other active to assail ;
Cleft is his shield, his helmet all in rents,
Transfixed and bloody his bright coat of mail,
Nor did a blow from his false arm descend,
That did not its inefficacy prove.
He shakes with fear, as in his heart contend
Despite, remorse, shame-consciousness and love.

XLI

With desperate courage he resolved at last
His desperate fortunes on a die to set ;
He flung his buckler from him, and griped fast
With both his hands his sword, unblooded yet,
Then darted in and grappled with his foe,
And struck ; nor was there any armour could
Resist the power of that tremendous blow :
It maimed his thigh, whence spurted streams of blood.

XLII

Then struck again ; resounding like a bell,
Rang the fierce stroke upon his ample brow,
Nor cleft his casque, tho' with such force it fell
That he recoiled and staggered from the blow ;
The prince's cheeks became inflamed with ire,
With wrathful lightning his red eye-balls flashed ;
Forth from his visor darted looks of fire,
And his clenched teeth with maddened fury gnashed.

XLIII

The perjured Pagan could not long sustain
The terror his ferocious looks expressed ;
He hears the whistling steel—thro' every vein
It seemed to penetrate his inmost breast.
The stroke he shuns, which on a pillar falls,
That of the flying drawbridge formed a part,
Whence sparks and splinters fly to heaven, and crawls
An icy shudder thro' the traitor's heart.

XLIV

Back to the bridge he flies, in flight alone
His only prospect of escape reposing.
Tancred pursues, and lays his hand upon
The craven's back, as foot with foot is closing ;
When lo ! (great succour for the fugitive)
The stars and torches disappear on high,
Nor in the night now lustreless survive
Ev'n the moon's beams to light the barren sky.

XLV

Lost amid witchcraft and the shades of night,
The victor persevered not in pursuit ;
Around—before—there was no gleam of light,
And he groped on with doubtful, cautious foot ;
Then stepped upon the threshold, undesigned,
Nor knew he had passed the entrance, until he
Heard the portcullis crashing down behind,
And found himself in dark captivity.

XLVI

As fishes rush where in Comacchio's creek
A marshy inlet the Adriatic forms,
To escape the ocean's ruthless waves, and seek
In those still waters refuge from its storms ;
It haps that they are by themselves shut in,
Nor from their fenny prison-house can dart,
Since that unique enclosure, like a gin,
Admits all comers, but lets none depart.

XLVII

Tancredi so, whate'er the springs that bound
The wondrous prison, of machine and art,
Entered with ease, but to his horror found
That, tho' he wished, he could not thence depart ;
He shook the gate with all his might and main,
But were his labours scattered to the wind.
Meanwhile a voice exclaimed, 'Thou striv'st in vain,
Armida's captive can no exit find.

XLVIII

‘Here thou wilt pass (of death there is no fear)
 Within a living tomb thy future days.’
 No answer deigned the haughty cavalier,
 Nor the deep anguish of his heart betrays ;
 But inwardly accuses love and fate,
 His own improvidence and others’ snare,
 And mournfully began to meditate :
 ‘To lose the sun’s bright beams I little care ;

XLIX

‘But of a brighter sun the sweeter sight
 I wretched lose, not knowing if I e’er
 Shall back return where her diviner light
 May dissipate the clouds of my despair.’
 Then of Arganté thought, and conscious burned :
 ‘I have failed too much in duty, and my name
 Most justly by my foeman will be spurned.
 Oh, my great fault ! oh, my eternal shame !’

L

While biting care of love and honour’s claim
 Did thus Tancredi’s noble soul distress,
 Impatient the Circassian knight became
 The downy pillow of his couch to press.
 Such hate of peace his cruel bosom steeled,
 Such thirst for blood and such desire for praise,
 That tho’ his wounds were not entirely healed,
 He burned to see the sixth morn’s welcome rays ;

LI

And on the night preceding the attack
 Scarce closed his eyes to get a moment’s rest,
 But rose, while all around him was still black,
 Long ere the dawn had gilt the mountain’s crest.
 ‘Bring me my arms,’ he thundered to his squire,
 Who had them ready for a sudden shift ;
 Not his accustomed ones—this suit entire
 Was the king’s present—a most costly gift.

LII

Around him them most heedlessly he flung,
Nor in the least appeared their weight to feel,
And at his side his wonted sabre hung,
Antique, and tempered of the finest steel.
Then as a comet, with ensanguined hair,
Which realms upsets and fierce diseases brings,
Sparkles at times in the parched sweltering air,
Light of ill omen to empurpled kings,

LIII

So flashed in arms the Turk ; his scowling eyes
Grimly he rolled, all drunk with blood and ire ;
Death and destruction his black looks premise,
His savage gestures dread of death inspire.
None could such strength or such reliance feel
As, without trembling, ev'n one glance sustain ;
Shouting, he raised and shook the naked steel,
And struck the shades and yielding air in vain.

LIV

'Soon shall the Christian plunderer,' he cried,
'That has with me the boldness to compare,
Fall on yon plain, in crimson torrents dyed,
And in the dust begrime his flowing hair,
And living, see, spite of his God, this hand
Him of his arms despoil ; and dying, hear
My stern refusal to his last demand,
That from the dogs I would his carcass spare.'

LV

Ev'n as a bull, whom jealous lust incites
With pungent stimulant, doth fiercely roar,
And by his roars his spirit more excites,
And wakes his rage and burning passion more ;
Whetting on trees his horns, he seems to invite
The wind to war with ineffective strokes ;
Furious, he stamps, and to embittered fight
His bellowing rivals from afar provokes ;

LVI

Moved by such fury, the Circassian knight
A herald called, whom curtly he addressed :
'Speed to the camp, and unto mortal fight
The presence of Christ's champion knight request.'
Waiting for none, he vaulted on his horse,
And made them lead the captive Frank ahead ;
Then sallied from the town, nor checked his course,
But down the hill precipitantly sped.

LVII

Meanwhile he blew his horn, whose brazen sound
Most dreadful discord through the mountains made,
And, like the peals of thunder rattling round,
All ears offended and all hearts dismayed.
Whence the Frank princes, through the camp dispersed,
Flew to the Imperial tent ; the herald there
His challenge gave, and named Tancredi first,
Yet none excluded who the risk would dare.

LVIII

At that Prince Godfrey, hanging in suspense,
Around him gazed with slow enquiring eyes ;
Nor, tho' he thought and looked with diligence,
Appeared one fit for such an enterprise.
The flower was absent of his chivalry ;
None of Tancredi any tidings knew ;
Afar was Boemond, and self-exiled, he,
The unconquered hero, that Gernando slew.

LIX

Besides the ten that had by lot been drawn,
Each stoutest, bravest, and most famous knight
Had with Armida secretly withdrawn,
Hid by the silence and the shades of night.
The rest, of hand less bold, of heart more weak,
Fixed on the ground their eyes, abashed and dumb,
Nor thro' such risk would one that honour seek ;
Their very shame by terror was o'ercome.

M

LX

The silence, look and attitude of those
 Soon caused Prince Godfrey to perceive their dread ;
 Whence, filled with zeal magnanimous, he rose
 From where he sat all suddenly, and said :
 ' Ah, most unworthy of this life were I
 Now to withhold it ; and how deep the shame
 To let a Pagan with impunity
 Thus trample on the honour of our name,

LXI

' Let my camp sit at ease, and thence, secure
 From every risk itself, my risks descry.
 Bring me my arms—quick, quick !' His armature
 Was brought him in the twinkling of an eye ;
 But loyal Raymond, who, mature in years,
 Mature was likewise in resolve and sense,
 Whose vigour matched the youngest cavalier's,
 Threw himself straight before the pious prince.

LXII

' No, no, my liege,' he cried ; ' we can't allow
 That the whole camp be jeopardized in thee,
 Not simple soldier, but the chief, art thou ;
 Public, not private, then the loss would be ;
 On thee our empire and our faith depend ;
 Destroyed by thee shall be proud Babel's throne ;
 Let others boldly with the sword contend,
 Fight thou by counsel and command alone.

LXIII

' But tho' old age condemns me to go bent,
 It never shall be said that I refuse.
 Let others shun war's stern experiment,
 My years shall not my backwardness excuse.
 Oh, were I in the prime of life, like ye
 That trembling stand aloof, false cavaliers,
 Unmoved by shame or animosity
 'Gainst him who hurls such insults in your ears

LXIV

'Would I were what I was when in the view
 Of all Germania, at great Conrad's court,
 His breast transfixing, Leopold I slew ;
 My vigorous frame then needed no support :
 And was my prowess more distinctly shown
 In bringing back the spoils of such a knight,
 Than if one now, unarmed and all alone,
 Put hosts of yon ignoble hordes to flight?

LXV

'Could youthful blood once more such strength impart,
 I had already slain yon cavalier ;
 Such as I am, however, my stout heart
 Within me droops not—old, I feel no fear ;
 And should I fall upon the battle-field,
 Victory, be sure, will cost the Pagan dear.
 Arm, arm I will, perhaps this day to gild
 With further honour still my past career.'

LXVI

Thus spake the sage. Like spurs, his words restore
 The dormant valour of both old and young,
 And those who timorous were and mute before,
 Are now most glib and daring with the tongue ;
 Each now demands the combat for himself,
 Nor are there any show the slightest fear :
 It Baldwin craves, and with Ruggiero, Guelph,
 The brothers Guido, Stephen, and Gernier ;

LXVII

And Pyrrhus, who the lauded stratagem made
 In giving Antioch to Boëmond ;
 The same wish too most eagerly displayed
 Everard, Ridolpho, and brave Rosamond,
 One Scotch, one Irish, and one English, lands
 That from our world are parted by the sea ;
 Gildippe and Edward make the same demands,
 Spouses that still uxorious lovers be.

LXVIII

But the old count far more than any sought
The danger and the glory of the task ;
Armed he already was, nor wanted aught
To his complete equipment, save his casque.
To whom, 'O living mirror,' Godfrey said,
'Of antique worth, may all beholding thee
Catch the reflection which thy virtues shed,
Thou soul of honour and bright chivalry !

LXIX

'O that I had ten other souls indued,
Among our youth, with gallantry like thine ;
Ne'er would I rest till Babel were subdued,
And spread from pole to pole the Cross divine.
But yield, I pray thee, and reserve in turn
Thyself for deeds more fitting age, nor grudge
That the others cast their names into an urn,
And from among them all let Fortune judge.

LXX

'Nay, God be judge, the servants of whose will
Are Fate and Fortune,' the good prince exclaimed,
But could not change Raimondo's thoughts ; he still
Wished with the other champions to be named.
The lots then Godfrey in his helmet threw ;
And when well mixed and shaken were the same,
In the first number that from it he drew,
Was read the noble Count Toulouse's name.

LXXI

His name was welcomed with applausive cries,
Nor any ventured Fortune's choice to blame ;
Fresh vigour seemed to sparkle in his eyes,
And he as lithe and juvenile became
As when in summer garb a serpent drest
Glistens with gold and shimmers in the sun.
The captain cheered him more than all the rest,
And augured victory as already won.

LXXII

And his own sabre taking from his flank,
 Gave it, and thus the gallant count addressed :
 ' This is the sabre which the rebel Frank,
 Rodolph of Saxony, of yore possessed ;
 From him I took it, and took with it too
 His life, by crimes innumerable stained :
 Take it, and may it in thy hands renew
 The laurels that in mine it has obtained.'

LXXIII

Meanwhile, impatient at their long delay,
 The truculent Turk with threatening gesture cries :
 ' Oh, unmatched people, Europe's brave array,
 Behold one man your mighty host defies :
 Let Tancred come, who seemed so fierce of late,
 If he have such reliance as before ;
 Or, couched on downy pillows, doth he wait
 For night to aid him, as it did of yore ?

LXXIV

' But if he fear, let others come. Come all,
 Come horse and foot in one united band,
 Since 'mid your hosts none answers to my call,
 Or dares to meet me singly hand to hand.
 Ye see the tomb where Mary's Son once lay ?
 Why not advance there, and your vows record—
 Why, cowards, pause ? ye see where lies the way,
 Or do you keep for greater need your sword ?'

LXXV

The brutal Saracen with such-like taunts
 The Christians did as with a scourge inflame ;
 But most of all beneath his braggart vaunts
 Raimondo writhed, nor could endure the shame ;
 His valour, goaded, still more fierce became,
 And gained on wrath's rough whetstone greater force ;
 Sudden he sprang on Aquiline, whose name
 Was given from speed unrivalled in the course.

LXXVI

Born by the Tagus was his destrier, where
 At times the mothers of the warrior drove
 (When spring's soft season instigates the mare
 With natural instinct and desire of love),
 Run open-mouthed against the teeming air,
 Which its prolific seeds doth introduce ;
 And by warm breath impregn'd (O marvel rare !)
 Conceive the greedy mothers, and produce.

LXXVII

And of a truth this Aquiline, you'd say,
 Was worthy offspring of his sire the wind,
 Or if you saw him lightly bound away
 Across the sand, nor leave a trace behind,
 Or curvet trippingly from left to right
 In mazy circles of the narrowest space.
 Mounted on such a steed, the noble knight
 Dashed to the assault, and heavenwards turned his face :

LXXVIII

' O God ! that erst directedst arms unskilled
 In Terebintus 'gainst Goliah, so
 That Judah's scourge was by a stripling killed,
 And the first pebble laid the giant low,
 Grant that I make a like example too ;
 Thy aid to slay this felon, I implore ;
 May feeble age now arrogance subdue,
 As feeble youth accomplished it of yore.'

LXXIX

Thus prayed the pious count : his prayers sincere,
 Moved by firm hope in Jesu, upwards rise,
 Winging their flight to the celestial sphere,
 As fire ascends by nature to the skies ;
 The Eternal Father heard, and from the band
 Of His supernal 'hosts an angel chose
 Him to protect from the impious Pagan's hand,
 And bring him safe in triumph from his foes.

LXXX

The angel who, by the Divine decree,
Was chosen Raymond's guardian, at his birth—
Aye, from the hour in which, an infant, he
Began his fatal pilgrimage on earth—
Now that heaven's King commanded him anew
To undertake the charge of his defence,
With outspread pinions to the fortress flew
Where stored are all heaven's warlike implements.

LXXXI

Here is preserved the lance by which, of yore,
The serpent fell ; the thundering bolts are here,
And shafts, themselves invisible, that pour
Plagues, pests, and famine on this lower sphere ;
Here hangs the trident whose terrific shocks
With dire affright earth's habitants confound,
When the foundations of the world it rocks,
And levels proudest cities with the ground.

LXXXII

Sparkling amid the other arms is seen
A diamond shield, of size so marvellous
That it can cover all the lands between
The distant Atlas and the Caucasus ;
Beneath the shelter of its ægis lie
Chaste, holy cities—princes just and good ;
This the angel took, and with it secretly
Approached the spot where his Raimondo stood.

LXXXIII

By a mixed crowd meanwhile the walls were filled ;
When the fell tyrant bold Clorinda sent,
With a strong escort of his troops most skilled,
Who halted half-way down, nor farther went ;
To the same end some Christian squadrons reined
Their destriers up upon the other side ;
Thus a large space 'twixt either camp remained
For the two combatants, unoccupied.

LXXXIV

Arganté stared, not seeing Tancredi there,
 But the strange features of an unknown knight ;
 When the count forward strode and said : ' Elsewhere,
 Haply for you, is he you seek in fight.
 Yet not exult therefore ; you see one here
 Prepared your proofs of valour to disprove,
 And represent the absent cavalier,
 Or on his own account take up your glove.'

LXXXV

Smiling, the braggart scornfully replied :
 ' What doth Tancredi ? Where is his retreat ?
 He threatens Heaven with arms, and yet doth hide,
 For safety trusting to his nimble feet ;
 But let him to earth's—ocean's centre flee,
 No spot shall screen him from my vengeance due.'
 ' You lie,' replied the count, ' to say that he
 Flees, who is worth a thousand such as you.'

LXXXVI

At this outroared the furious Saracen :
 ' Take you the field then, and his place supply,
 And quickly we shall see how you maintain
 The bold bravado of those words, " You lie ! " '
 Thus to the tilt they spurred—their blood inflamed,
 Each aiming at the other's helm ; and tho'
 Raimondo struck the Pagan where he aimed,
 He scarcely moved him in his saddle-bow.

LXXXVII

On the other hand, Arganté was descried
 Vainly (rare case with him) to use his spear,
 Since the good angel turned the stroke aside
 From the protected Christian cavalier.
 His teeth with fury the foiled savage gnashed,
 His spear he cursed and shivered on the plain,
 Then drew his sword, and at Raimondo dashed
 A second time with all his might and main,

LXXXVIII

And pressed his steed straightforward, in despite,
As when a ram bows down his head to butt ;
But Raymond shunned his charge, and to the right
Wheeled, and delivered on his front a cut.
The Egyptian cavalier turned round again,
To the right again the wary Christian sprung,
And caught him on his helm—but all in vain,
Upon the adamant his sabre rung.

LXXXIX

But, to close quarters covetous to come,
The Pagan tried to rush in on his foe,
Who fearing he must to such weight succumb,
And both his own and destrier's overthrow,
Gives way—attacks—then scours across the plain,
Twisting and turning from his hot pursuit ;
The slightest, gentlest pressure of the rein
His quick steed follows with unerring foot,

XC

As captain who some lofty tower invests,
'Mid marshes placed, or on a beetling mount,
Tries countless openings, nor contented rests
With these or those—so wandered round the count ;
And since he could not pierce the well-wrought scales
That armed the Saracen from head to heel,
The weaker parts and joinings he assails,
An entrance seeking 'twixt the plates of steel.

XCI

His foeman's arms he had already hacked,
And blood oozed forth thro' many a gaping rent ;
But still the count preserved his own intact,
Nor lost a single plume or ornament.
Into fresh rage Arganté vainly broke,
Vainly he smote and wasted strength and ire,
Yet grew not tired, but doubled every stroke,
And seemed fresh force from failure to acquire.

XCII

And 'mid unnumbered blows, the Saracen
At last struck one when Raymond was so near,
That able scarce had been fleet Aquiline
To save his lord, who must have fallen ; but here
The angel failed not succour to afford,
Who hovered close, from mortal eye concealed ;
With outstretched arm, he caught his cruel sword
Upon the diamond of the heavenly shield.

XCIII

The sword snapped short—no earthly tempered steel,
Forged by the arm of mortal, could withstand
The arms, unmixed and incorruptible,
Of heavenly smith—and fell upon the sand.
Arganté scarce, though seeing on the ground
The splintered fragments, could believe his sight,
And marvelled, as unarmed himself he found,
To know what armour armed the Christian knight.

XCIV

Truly he deemed his sword was broken by
The massive buckler of that doughty chief ;
Not knowing who descended from the sky.
The gallant Raymond had the same belief,
Who, when he saw his foe disarmed, awhile
Paused in suspense, and from the fight refrained,
Deeming those worthless palms and laurels vile
At such advantage from another gained.

XCV

'Take'—he was going to say—'another sword,'
When other thoughts sprang up and made him pause,
Since by defeat disgrace would be incurred,
He being the champion of a public cause ;
Thus, though vile palms he scorned, he would not place
In risk their common honour. As he hung
Divided by these thoughts, against his face
The hilt and pommel base Arganté flung.

XCVI

And at the same time pricked his destrier,
 And tried his foe to gripe in close embrace ;
 Nor did the well-directed missile err,
 But struck Toulouse's Count upon the face.
 But, in no way alarmed, the wary knight
 Swiftly drew back when he the danger saw,
 And pierced his hand, which was outstretched to smite
 With angrier menace than a tiger's claw.

XCVII

Then wheeled from right to left, and back again
 From left to right ; and as he came and went
 Aye struck the false, disloyal Saracen,
 Nor ever failed in his malignant intent.
 All that he had of vigour and of skill,
 All that could old despite and new-born ire,
 He mustered up to work his foeman ill :
 And with him Fate and Heaven itself conspire.

XCVIII

Armed in himself, and in fine armour, he
 Resists the count's attack, and nothing fears ;
 Like a huge ship upon the boisterous sea,
 Sails, yards, helm gone, the Saracen appears,
 Which, built of solid oak, still stoutly braves
 The storm that rages all around, nor bares
 Her battered sides to the tempestuous waves,
 Nor altogether of herself despairs.

XCIX

Arganté, such thy peril, when to aid
 Thy cause himself Beëlzebub disposed ;
 He of thin air an unsubstantial shade,
 In form of man (strange prodigy !) composed ;
 It feigned Clorinda's noble face and air,
 Her silver surcoat and resplendent arms ;
 He gave it speech, and, tho' no mind was there,
 Her well-known voice, her bearing, and her charms.

C

The phantom went to Oradine, and cried
 (An archer he of wondrous skill and fame):
 'Oh, Oradine, who, where thou will'st, canst guide
 The flying shaft, and never miss thy aim,
 What loss 'twould be if such a worthy knight,
 Judæa's bold defender, were to die,
 And in his spoils, triumphant from the fight,
 Unscathed return his mortal enemy!

CI

'Now prove thy skill—thy fatal arrow dye
 In yon Frank robber's blood; thy gracious lord,
 Besides the lasting fame, thou may'st rely,
 Will pay thee back commensurate reward.'
 Thus spake the shade; nor did the archer doubt,
 Soon as he heard of guerdon for the blow,
 But from his quiver drew an arrow out,
 Affixed it to the cord, and bent the bow.

CII

The tense cord twangs—resounding through the air
 With whizzing ring the feathered quarrel glides,
 And strikes Raimondo in the girdle, where
 The buckles clasp it, and the belt divides;
 The mail it pierces, but, in blood scarce dyed,
 His skin just grazes, then arrests its course,
 Since the celestial warrior denied
 Its further progress, and destroyed its force.

CIII

From his cuirass the count the arrow drew,
 And when the blood, that followed, met his sight,
 He hurled reproaches on the Pagan, who
 Had broken the conditions of the fight.
 The captain, who ne'er took his anxious eye
 From his beloved Raimondo, now perceived
 The pact was broken by the enemy,
 And since he deemed the wound was dangerous, grieved,

CIV

And woke with glowing words and angry frown
His knights, to see Raimondo's wrongs redressed.
With one accord they drew their vizors down,
Their bridles slacked, and lances placed in rest ;
And in an instant from both sides are seen
Some squadrons spurring forward. From all eyes
The field is hid ; and to the blue serene
Clouds of rare dust in solid circles rise.

CV

At the first shock was heard the ringing sound
Of shivered spear, of splintering helm and shield ;
Here lay a destrier prostrate on the ground,
There, riderless, one galloped o'er the field ;
Here lay a warrior dead ; still breathing, there
Another sobbed and groaned, another sighed.
Fierce was the fight ; and as more close they were,
More fierce the struggle grew on either side.

CVI

Into the middle lithe Arganté sprung,
And from a soldier snatched an iron mace,
And, bursting through the serried masses, swung
It round and round, and soon cleared ample space,
But only Raymond sought ; his steel and ire
'Gainst him alone were turned with frantic hate ;
Like greedy wolf, his ravening desire
Was in his blood his appetite to sate.

CVII

But soon his path is so beset with foes,
And so encumbered, that it checks his course ;
'Gainst him Ormanno, Balneville oppose,
With Guido and the Gerards, all their force.
Yet paused not he, nor slacked, nay, grew more hot
The more he hindrance from those galliards found,
As fire pent up within a narrow spot
Bursts forth, and spreads still greater ruin round.

CVIII

He wounded Guido, Prince Ormanno slew,
 And languid Roger stretched among the slain ;
 But still the crowds increased, and round him drew
 A serried cirque of bristling arms and men :
 While thro' his valour was maintained the fray
 On equal terms between the rival foes,
 Godfrey his brother called, and said : ' Away !
 And on the Paynim with thy squadron close ;

CIX

' And 'gainst their left, where seems most desperate
 The battle's rage, lead on thy serried ranks.'
 Away he dashed, and was the shock so great
 With which he charged his adversary's flanks,
 That Asia's languid sons had not the force
 To stand the impetuous onslaught of the Frank :
 The line is broken, and beneath their horse
 The Pagan cavalry and standards sank.

CX

From the same charge the right wing turned and fled,
 Nor was there any made the least defence,
 Except Arganté ; with loose rein they sped
 Headlong, impelled by fear's o'erwhelming sense ;
 Alone he stood his ground, and showed bold front ;
 Nor had Briareus with a hundred hands
 Equalled Arganté in the battle's brunt,
 Though fifty shields he waved, and fifty brands.

CXI

The charge of cavalry, the thrusts, the blows,
 And flying shafts, he valiantly sustained ;
 Able for all he seemed, as now on those
 He boldly threw himself, now these restrained.
 Bruised were his limbs, his armour hacked and torn,
 Tho' blood and sweat he poured, unconscious all ;
 At last, by surging numbers overborne,
 He with the crowd was backward forced to fall.

CXII

His back he turned to that great torrent's might
That swept him on, and forced him to withdraw,
Tho' step or heart betrayed no signs of flight,
If thro' his hand's bold deeds that heart you saw.
Terror still shone from his defiant eyes,
Which failed not their old menace to retain ;
And superhuman were his energies
To check the flying masses, but in vain.

CXIII

Not ev'n could that Magnanimous obtain,
That they retired in more collected bands ;
Since fear obeys no reason and no rein,
Nor heedeth now entreaties or commands.
But pious Buglion had no sooner viewed
That Fortune turned to favour his intent,
Than the smooth path of victory he pursued,
And fresh assistance to the victors sent.

CXIV

And were it not that it was not the day,
By the Almighty's changeless laws decreed,
This was perhaps the very hour that they,
Their blest toils o'er, Jerusalem had freed.
But Satan's satellites, who in that fight
Beheld how their own tyranny declined
(Permission gained), obscured with clouds the light,
And, in a moment, loosed the raging wind.

CXV

Before men's eyes a veil of darkness fell,
Shrouding the day and sun. Then seemed to blaze
The lurid heaven more horribly than hell :
The lightning flashed with such terrific rays ;
Peals rattling thunder ; rains in hail descend,
That drowns the fallows, and the meadows fills ;
The whirlwind's force cracks boughs, and seems to bend
Not oaks alone, but even rocks and hills.

CXVI

As thus with force combined, storm, wind, and rain
 Full in the face abruptly struck the Franks,
 The sudden fury of the hurricane
 Checked, as it filled with panic fear, their ranks.
 Alone the smaller part collected were
 Under the standards, since they could not see ;
 When bold Clorinda, of this fact aware,
 Spurred on to seize the opportunity,

CXVII

And to her comrades cried, ' For us contends
 Heaven, and Eternal Justice aid affords ;
 Not in our faces its fierce wrath descends,
 Hence, unencumbered, we can use our swords.
 Angered alone 'gainst them Heaven's fury drives,
 Right in the teeth of our affrighted foes ;
 Their arms it strikes, and them of light deprives :
 Then on, where Fate the path to victory shows.'

CXVIII

Thus cheered the Pagans, and upon her back
 Alone receiving the outburst of Hell,
 Made 'gainst the Franks a desperate attack,
 Scorning the blows that from them idly fell.
 At the same time Arganté, turning too,
 Sad havoc 'mong the former victors made,
 As from the field they panic-stricken flew,
 And to the sword and storm their backs displayed.

CXIX

The wrath immortal and the mortal sword
 To strike the affrighted fugitives combined ;
 And streams of blood, mixed with the rain that poured,
 That scene of murderous strife encarnadined.
 Here, amid heaps of dying and of dead,
 Pyrrhus and brave Ridolpho breathless lie ;
 The latter's life-blood the Circassian shed,
 The former was Clorinda's victory.

CXX

Thus fled the Franks, and still in eager chase
The Syrian troops and hellish fiends pursued ;
Alone Prince Godfrey turned a fearless face
'Gainst their fierce arms, and 'gainst the menace rude
That thunder, hail, and wind accumulate ;
Rebuking bitterly his knightly peers,
Then checked his noble steed before the gate,
Within which fled the routed cavaliers.

CXXI

And twice his steed that gallant hero dashed
'Gainst fierce Arganté, and his charge repelled ;
And twice with naked falchion thrust and slashed,
Where still their ground the thickest squadrons held.
At length, with all the others he retired
Behind the entrenchments ; then, the victory gained,
The Turks withdrew ; and, terrified and tired,
Within the encampment the Frank troops remained ;

CXXII

Nor altogether could escape ev'n there
The force and fury of that hurricane :
Blown out are all the lights, and everywhere
Rushes the wind and penetrates the rain ;
Smashed are the stakes, split canvas, shivered cords,
Uprooted tents, which to the skies are hurled ;
With thunder, wind, and shrieks the rain accords,
In horrid harmony that stuns the world.

CANTO VIII.

I

THE wind to vent its violence had ceased,
Hushed was the storm, no more the thunder rolled,
When fair Aurora issued from the east,
With brow of roses and with foot of gold;
Yet ceased not from their hellish arts and aim
Those fiends infernal who the tempest woke;
Nay, one of them, Astagoras by name,
Thus to his comrade, foul Alecto, spoke :

II

'Alecto, see yon cavalier arrive
(Nor can his progress all our arts delay),
Who from the ruthless hands has 'scaped alive
Of the supreme defender of our sway;
Now he, relating to the Franks the fate
Of his bold leader and his comrades' fall,
Important tidings will disseminate,
Whence they, I fear, Rinaldo may recall.

III

'Thou knowest how fatal that. We must oppose
To great beginnings all our craft and force.
Descend at once, then, 'mid our hated foes,
And to black import turn his fair discourse;
Scatter thy brands, and with thy bane infect
Swiss, Latins, British, all of most renown;
Sow strife and discord, and such deeds effect
That the whole camp may be turned upside down.

IV

'The task is worthy thee, who to thy lord
Such vaunting promises hast made.' Thus spake ;
Nor needed she (foul fiend) another word
To induce her the emprise to undertake.
Meanwhile the knight, whose coming they descried,
Reached the encampment of the Franks, and said :
'I crave your favour to let some one guide
Me, noble warriors, to your sovran head.'

V

Him crowds escorted to the captain's tent,
Eager the pilgrim's embassy to hear ;
To kiss his honoured hand he lowly bent,
The hand that makes proud Babel quake with fear.
'Sire,' he exclaimed, 'the measure of whose fame
Doth from the ocean to the planets reach,
Would upon happier errand that I came ;'
Here deeply sighed, and thus resumed his speech :

VI

'Sweno, the King of Denmark's only son,
The prop and glory of his falling years,
Burned to be ranked with those that have girt on
The sword 'neath thee as Jesus' cavaliers ;
Nor dread of danger, nor the fear of toil,
Nor lust of rule, nor love of his old sire,
Could his praiseworthy resolution foil,
Nor of his generous bosom quench the fire.

VII

'He longed to learn the military art,
And stern laborious warfare to endure
'Neath thee, its master ; and he felt in part
Disgrace that his name should remain obscure,
While upon all sides was Rinaldo's heard,
To whose green youth was golden glory given ;
But more than by all motives he was stirred,
Not by mere earthly fame, but zeal for Heaven.

VIII

'At last, delay he could no longer brook,
 But a bold company of comrades chose,
 And straight his way towards distant Thracia took,
 Where the empire's seat, august Byzantium, rose ;
 There the Greek king received him in his hall,
 There, too, arrived a herald in thy name,
 Who did the news of mighty Antioch's fall,
 How won it was, and then how held, proclaim—

IX

'Held 'gainst the Persian, who besieged it then,
 And with such numbers the blockade maintained,
 It seemed as tho' of all its arms and men
 That populous empire was entirely drained.
 Of thee he spoke, and many another knight,
 Until Rinaldo reaching, he delayed
 To tell the story of his daring flight,
 And of his glorious acts in the Crusade.

X

'And added, that to storm these gates, the Franks
 In force already congregated were ;
 And then invited him to join their ranks,
 And in at least their crowning victory share.
 These words so fired the youthful Sweno's breast,
 That every hour appeared to him an age
 Till 'gainst the Turks he placed his lance in rest,
 And in their blood had quenched his noble rage.

XI

'It seemed he felt his indolence reprov'd
 By others' glory, nor that thought could bear ;
 Nor was by counsel or entreaty moved,
 Or that he would not heed, or did not hear.
 No risk he feared, excepting not to find
 Himself in all thy risks and fame comprised ;
 This was the gravest peril in his mind,
 Others he either saw not, or despised.

XII

' And he himself precipitated fate,
Fate which forced us, and led him willing on,
So that he would not for his going wait,
Ev'n for the rising of the morrow's sun.
To him the shorter seemed the better way :
'Twas thus our lord and gallant leader chose ;
No pathless pass did his advance delay,
Nor shunned he lands tho' overrun by foes.

XIII

' Now toilsome march we faced, now want of food,
Now open force, now ambuscades ; but those,
And every other hardship, we subdued,
Now slain, now routed, were our various foes ;
Success had confidence engendered, nay,
Had made us both vainglorious and supine.
At length encamped we were, one fatal day,
Upon the boundaries of Palestine.

XIV

' There from the watchful scouts our leaders learned
That clank of arms they could distinctly hear ;
Had indications seen, and flags discerned,
From which they judged a numerous force was near.
Nor voice or colour, countenance or thought,
Changed our bold leader when he heard the tale ;
Many there were tho', when the news was brought,
Whose cheeks from lily-livered fear grew pale.

XV

' But Sweno cried, " How near we now possess
The victor's laurel or the martyr's crown !
The first I hope for most, nor covet less
That which has greater worth and like renown.
This field, O brothers ! where we are standing now
A shrine of deathless memory will be,
To which posterity will point, and show
The tokens of our death or victory."

XVI

'This said, at once the sentries he disposed,
 Their various duties upon each assessed ;
 He willed that none without being armed reposed,
 Nor of his armour would himself divest ;
 'Twas now that hour most friendly to repose
 And solemn silence, when a barbarous yell,
 So deafening, thro' the startled welkin rose,
 That to high heaven it reached and down to hell.

XVII

"To arms! to arms!" a thousand voices cried,
 And Sweno, armed, before them all dashed on :
 The fire of battle his flushed features dyed,
 And in his eyes with light congenial shone.
 Attacked we were—encircling us there stood
 A serried circle of the Infidel ;
 Around us swords and lances formed a wood,
 Above us showers of hissing arrows fell.

XVIII

'In the unequal combat (for our foes
 At least had twenty soldiers to our one)
 Many were wounded by the random blows
 Struck under cover of the dusk ; but none
 Distinguish could among the blinding shades,
 How many fell upon that fatal field,
 Since both our losses and heroic deeds
 Were by the night's Cimmerian shroud concealed.

XIX

'Still his bold brow so proudly Sweno raised,
 That amid all 'twere easy him to tell ;
 Ev'n in the dark his prowess all amazed,
 His valiant deeds appeared incredible.
 A mound of dead—a stream of running gore
 Round him a rampire and a moat had made ;
 Where'er he turned, the youthful hero bore
 Fright in his eyes—destruction in his blade.

XX

'Thus battled we until the morrow's dawn
Had o'er the heavens her roseate mantle spread ;
But when the nightly horrors were withdrawn,
That had concealed the horrors of the dead,
The wished-for light our hearts with terror thrilled
When was revealed that most appalling sight
With corpses was the entire encampment filled,
And scarcely any had survived the night.

XXI

'Two thousand once, and not a hundred now !
When Sweno had that frightful carnage seen,
'Twere hard to say, by his unruffled brow,
If his heart felt the horror of the scene,
He showed it not—nay, loudly shouting, said :
"With those our gallant comrades let us vie,
Who, spurning the dark regions of the dead,
Have traced in blood a pathway to the sky."

XXII

'His looks the impress of his spirit wore,
Happy, I ween, at his approaching death ;
Against the barbarous ruin he still bore
A heart intrepid, filled with firmest faith ;
No temper had been able to sustain,
Tho' of the finest steel or diamond,
The blows with which he deluges the plain :
His body now became one single wound.

XXIII

'Undying valour, not poor life, sustained
That fierce unyielding corpse ; still blow for blow
He gave, nor yet his deathless arm refrained ;
The more they strike, the more he struck—when, lo !
'Gainst him advanced a most infuriate knight,
That all in size and savage look surpassed,
Who, after obstinate and lengthened fight,
Aided by hosts, prostrated him at last.

XXIV

' The youth unconquered fell—ah, bitter fate !
 Nor was there one that could avenge his fall ;
 Ah, my lord's relics—ah, inanimate
 Blood shed so nobly, upon you I call,
 That I was not then covetous of life,
 Nor shunned the brunt of battle, and had I
 Fallen by God's will in that disastrous strife,
 I had not ill deserved with him to die.

XXV

' Among the dead alone I fell alive ;
 Nor did they deem me such that left me : so
 Benumbed was every sense, in vain I strive
 To recollect what then befell the foe ;
 But when recovered from that death-like trance,
 Mine eyes, erst sealed in gloom, regained their sight,
 Midnight it seemed, and my enfeebled glance
 Descried the flicker of a little light.

XXVI

' Still not sufficient virtue I possessed
 Things clearly to discern, but saw as those
 Half sleeping, half awake, in fitful rest,
 Who now their eyelids open and now close ;
 And now my cruel wounds began to tease,
 And with still greater anguish torture me ;
 Racked by the nipping frost and midnight breeze,
 The earth my couch, the stars my canopy.

XXVII

' Meanwhile that light drew nearer and more near,
 Until it came and rested at my side,
 And silent whisperings murmured in my ear.
 Tho' able scarce to raise my head, I spied
 Two figures clothed in flowing robes ; they stood
 With torches in their hands, and whispered : " Place
 Thy trust in Him who ne'er forgets the good,
 But ever prayer anticipates by grace."

XXVIII

' Thus having spoke the reverend strangers, one
 His hand stretched over me, as if to bless,
 And breathed in low and reverential tone
 Words little heard, and comprehended less.
 " Rise," he then added. I, alert and sound,
 Rose, nor the anguish of my wounds perceived ;
 Nay—gracious miracle—my limbs I found
 New strength and new-born virtue had received.

XXIX

' Stupid, I stared ; nor could my soul receive
 As truth the miracle it felt was true ;
 Whence one—" What, faithless mortal, not believe !
 What doubts distract, what thoughts unsettle you ?
 This is substantial flesh you see in us ;
 Servants we are of Jesus, who have fled
 The world, so sweet-tongued, yet so treacherous,
 And hermit lives in this lone desert led.

XXX

" The Almighty Lord, who everywhere doth reign,
 For thy salvation did myself elect ;
 He by ignoble means does not disdain
 Ends both sublime and wondrous to effect ;
 Nor wills that body should neglected be,
 In which once dwelt a soul so worthy—even
 That form which, clothed in immortality,
 Must with the soul again unite in heaven.

XXXI

" I mean Prince Sweno's corpse ; for which shall be
 A tomb erected worthy his high fame,
 Where aye the finger of posterity
 Will point with pride to his undying name.
 But to the stars lift up your sight ; behold
 That sun-like one which sparkles in the skies ;
 It will conduct you, with its rays of gold,
 To where the corpse of your brave leader lies."

XXXII

‘ From that sublime irradiation—nay,
From that nocturnal sun a beam descended,
And straight to where his glorious body lay,
It like a pencil’s golden line extended,
And o’er it shed such floods of dazzling light,
That brightly shone and sparkled every wound.
At once I recognized the lifeless knight,
Amid the frightful carnage spread around.

XXXIII

‘ Not prone to earth he grovelling lay, but, even
As starwards ever tended his desires,
He kept his face fixed steadily on heaven,
Like one who thereunto, enrapt, aspires ;
His threatening right hand, round the hilt comprest,
Ready to strike, a naked falchion bore ;
The left was humbly laid upon his breast,
And seemed God’s grace and pardon to implore.

XXXIV

‘ While with my tears I bathed each gaping wound,
Yet could not thus my soul-felt grief subdue,
The holy sage his closed right hand unbound,
And from its grasp his blood-stained sabre drew.
“ This,” he exclaimed, “ which has to-day outpoured
Such streams of blood, with which it is crimsoned yet,
Is perfect, as you know ; nor is there sword
That better merits such an epithet.

XXXV

“ Whence if it now through cruel death departs
From its first lord, by Heaven’s supreme command
It shall not rest inactive in these parts,
But pass along from hand to valiant hand,
Which then shall use it with like force and skill,
But longer and more fortunately too ;
And on the Paynim that did Sweno kill
Shall wreak dire vengeance, as its rightful due.

XXXVI

“ By Solyman was gallant Sweno slain,
 By Sweno's sword must Solymano fall ;
 Receive it, then, and hasten to the plain,
 Where the Frank host besieges Salem's wall ;
 Nor needest thou, tho' in a foreign land,
 Fresh interruption to thy journey fear,
 Since will be smoothed all dangers by the hand
 Of Him who now directs thy footsteps there.

XXXVII

“ There 'tis His will thy voice should testify—
 That voice which He so wondrously preserved—
 The valorous spirit and deep piety
 Which thou hast in thy well-loved lord observed ;
 That his example should the world inspire
 To bear the purple Cross, and animate
 All noble spirits with the like desire,
 His deeds throughout all time to emulate.

XXXVIII

“ It but remains to know his name, my son,
 Who of the sword is the predestined heir ;
 That is the youth Rinaldo, with whom none
 In point of valour can the least compare.
 Give it to him, and say, to him alone
 Both heaven and earth for retribution look.”
 While thus intent I hung upon each tone,
 Another wonder my attention took.

XXXIX

‘ For there, where Sweno's noble corse reposed,
 All of a sudden I beheld a tomb,
 That, rising up, his lifeless form enclosed ;
 Nor can I tell how raised there, or by whom
 The name and worth of the departed knight
 A few brief words recorded. All amazed,
 I knew not how to leave that wondrous sight,
 As on the letters, on the stone I gazed.

XL

“ Here, near his faithful friends,” resumed the sage,
 “ Inshrined the body of thy lord shall lie,
 While their souls gain a glorious heritage
 Of love and joy eternal in the sky ;
 But having with thy tears thy duty done,
 Now to repose the shades of eve invite ;
 Be thou my guest, then, till to-morrow’s sun
 With its new beams thy matin journey light.”

XLI

‘ He ceased, and led me up and down among
 Wild ways that I with difficulty passed,
 Till at a hollow cave, that beetling hung
 From savage rocks, we stayed our steps at last.
 This his abode ; here he, ’mid wolves and bears,
 Dwells with his friend secure, since less defence
 The steel-clad soldier in his armour wears,
 Than man unarmed, in holy innocence.

XLII

‘ Here to my limbs hard bed and hermit fare
 Refreshment gave, and much desired repose ;
 But when the matin beams rekindled were,
 And the dawn pranked in gold and purple rose,
 The wakeful hermits failed not to perceive
 The light that summoned them to morning prayer,
 And rose ; and with them I—then took my leave,
 And bent my course, as they directed, here.’

XLIII

Here ceased the Dane, and thus the pious chief :
 ‘ Sad news thou bringest to the camp, sir knight,
 Nor fails thy narrative, so fraught with grief,
 In us congenial sorrow to excite,
 Since from us friends so ready with the sword
 An hour has snatched, absorbed a little clay—
 Like heaven’s own lightning, thy illustrious lord
 Flashed for a moment, and then passed away.

XLIV

'But then, far happier was his bloody doom,
 Than that of those who gold and realms bequeath,
 Nor can the Capitol record to whom
 Was given more worthily its laurel wreath :
 They in the lucent temple of the sky
 With victory's deathless coronets are crowned,
 There show the tokens of their gallantry,
 And point contented to each glorious wound.

XLV

'But thou, that for the toils and perils new
 Of the world's warfare still remainest here,
 Shouldst in their glorious triumphs triumph too,
 And of its gloom thy clouded aspect clear ;
 And since Bertholdo's son thou seekest, know
 That from the camp are turned his flying feet,
 Nor in direction doubtful shouldst thou go,
 'Till we have learned sure news of his retreat.'

XLVI

This their discourse awakened and renewed
 Love of Rinaldo, and with friendly ruth
 Many exclaimed, 'Alas ! 'mid Pagans rude,
 Imperilled, wanders the adventurous youth ;'
 Nor is there one but in his favour pleads,
 Recounting his great exploits to the Dane,
 And the long web of his heroic deeds,
 To his surprise, they unravel and explain.

XLVII

Now while all hearts with tender pity yearned,
 At bare remembrance of Bertholdo's son,
 Lo ! to the encampment many of those returned
 Who to the fields a-foraging had gone,
 Bringing in great abundance with them, beeves
 And fleecy cattle carried off by force,
 With but a scant supply of golden sheaves
 And straw to assuage the hunger of the horse.

XLVIII

Back, too, they signs of dire misfortune brought,
 That seemed to all appearances most true,
 The snowy cloak in which Rinaldo fought,
 All torn and bloody, and his arms pierced through.
 Soon (for who could such circumstances hide?)
 A vague uncertain rumour 'mong them spread,
 And sorrowing thousands pressed from every side,
 To see the armour of the mighty dead.

XLIX

They saw and recognized the ponderous mass
 Of his huge hauberk and its blaze of light,
 Marked the haught eagle on his bright cuirass,
 Proving her brood in the sun, ere trust their flight ;
 Those stainless arms they used to see of old
 Foremost, or all unaided, in the fight,
 Not without deep compassion they behold
 Lie in such bloody and disordered plight.

L

While the camp whispered, and his friends, appalled,
 Rinaldo's death on various causes lay,
 The pious Godfrey Aliprando called,
 Leader of those that had brought back the prey,
 One of curt, truthful speech and liberal mind ;
 To whom the captain : ' The whole truth reveal ;
 Say where and how you did this armour find,
 Nor from me aught, or good or ill, conceal.

LI

' From here so distant, captain,' he replies,
 ' As in two days a messenger could ride,
 Towards Gaza's confines, a small plateau lies,
 Shut in by hills, and of the high-road wide ;
 Through it, its source above, a river steals,
 Softly and slowly, where intricate shade
 Of tangled trees and matted brake conceals
 A spot most suitable for ambushade.

LII

'There we had gone in search of flocks that might
 Chance to depasture on its herbous shore,
 When on the bank we spied a lifeless knight,
 And found the grass encarnadined with gore ;
 The arms, though fouled, at the first glance we knew,
 And the haught crest, at which aghast all shrunk ;
 To see the features I then nearer drew,
 But found the head was severed from the trunk.

LIII

'The right hand, too, was gone, and many a wound
 From back to breast transfix'd the mighty dead.
 Near lay an empty helmet on the ground,
 On which the eagle its white wings outspread ;
 When as I sought for information, lo !
 A solitary peasant loomed in sight,
 Who when he saw us turned his back to go,
 And darted off in most precipitous flight.

LIV

'Pursued and captured, he at length replied
 To our repeated questions, and revealed
 That on the previous day large bands he spied
 From the woods sally, where he lay concealed,
 One of whom by its golden locks upheld
 A severed head with clotted blood besmeared,
 Which, as it with attention he beheld,
 That of a youthful beardless boy appeared.

LV

'That it the same soon afterwards suspended
 In a silk apron from his saddle-bow,
 And that from their attire he apprehended
 They, like ourselves, were Christian soldiers, too.
 I made them strip the corse, so deeply grieving,
 That the bare doubt caused tears in floods to fall ;
 The arms I took away, injunctions leaving
 To give the dead befitting burial.

LVI

'But if the corse be that which I believe,
 Far other tomb and pomp it merits well.'
 Thus Aliprando spoke, then took his leave,
 Since he had no more certain facts to tell.
 Pensive Prince Godfrey stood, and deeply sighed ;
 Still of his sad suspicion felt not sure,
 And of the headless trunk and homicide
 Wished evidence more certain to procure.

LVII

Meanwhile uprose the night, and 'neath her wings
 Covered the boundless regions of the sky ;
 And sleep, which quiet and oblivion brings,
 Assuaged the sorrows of mortality.
 Thou only, Argillan, by grave thoughts oppressed,
 And stung by sorrow, didst sad vigils keep :
 In vain thine eyes and agitated breast
 Wooed calm repose, or sweet refreshing sleep.

LVIII

Of ready hand, of bold unbridled tongue,
 Hot-headed, fervent, and impulsive, he
 On Tronto's banks was born and bred, among
 Intestine broils of hate and anarchy.
 Then from his country into exile sent,
 He filled with blood the hills and shores around,
 Till into Asia to make war he went,
 And thro' more worthy means became renowned.

LIX

At length, towards dawn, ev'n he his eyelids closed,
 But not in tranquil or refreshing sleep ;
 A stupor 'twas Alecto had infused,
 Not death itself more heavy was, or deep.
 It seemed his inmost senses to delude,
 So that, tho' sleeping, he obtained no rest,
 Since, in a goblin's grim similitude,
 The Fury came, and terrified his breast.

LX

A mighty bust's incarnate form she feigned,
 From which the right hand and the head were gone ;
 Her left a reeking severed skull sustained,
 With blood bedabbled, and from pallor wan.
 The lifeless features breathed, and breathing spoke,
 And speaking, poured forth blood and many a sigh :
 ' Fly your false leader's tents and hateful yoke.
 See you not yet the truth ? Argillan, fly !

LXI

' Who will protect you, comrades, from the fraud
 Of ruthless Godfrey, who has murdered me ?
 By blackest envy is the villain gnawed,
 Nor thinks he but how you may murdered be.
 Still, if your hand aspired to noble praise,
 If in it place such confidence you could,
 Fly not ! no, no, but let the wretch appease
 My guileless shade with his malignant blood.

LXII

' A shadow ministrant, with steel and ire
 I'll arm you hand, and animate your breast.'
 Thus spoke, nor failed such language to inspire
 New springs of fury. From his restless rest
 Sudden he started, rolling all aghast
 His eyes, with venom and blind rage infect ;
 Armed as he was, he rushed with breathless haste
 The Italian knights together to collect.

LXIII

Them he assembled where suspended hung
 Rinaldo's well-known arms, and in the excess
 Of his unbridled, domineering tongue,
 Disgorged his fancied wrongs and bitterness :
 ' What ! shall a tyrant barbarous multitude,
 That reason prize not, and no faith maintain—
 Shall they, ne'er satisfied with gold and blood,
 Our spirits bridle, and our necks enchain ?

o.

LXIV

'The hardships and indignities that we,
 Beneath their yoke, for seven long years have borne,
 Sufficient were to fire all Italy
 And Rome, for ages, with despite and scorn.
 I pass in silence Tancred's wrongs, and how
 His head and hand Cilicia's realm subdued,
 Thro' reason which the Frank enjoyeth now,
 And fraud usurps the prize of fortitude.

LXV

'I pass, when time and utmost need require
 Unflinching nerve, firm purpose, ready hand,
 How thro' a thousand deaths we first aspire
 To wield the sword, and bear the blazing brand ;
 And when, peace made, apportioned are the shares
 Of palms and pillage 'mid the victor bands,
 Not ours the prizes, but entirely theirs
 The fame, the gold, the honours, and the lands.

LXVI

'Time was, perhaps, when such iniquities
 Had seemed most grave and monstrous in our sight,
 I pass them now as nothing, since all these
 Have through a heinous crime become most light.
 They have slain Rinaldo, thus despising even
 The laws of God, and scorning human right.
 Where are thy bolts, insulted, outraged Heaven ?
 Earth, where the jaws of thy perpetual night ?

LXVII

'They have slain Rinaldo, our faith's sword and shield,
 And, unrevenged, shall we sit tamely by ?
 Yes, unrevenged he is, and on the field
 They have let his maimed, unburied body lie.
 Will ye that I his murderer declare ?
 But ah, from whom can be concealed his name ?
 For who can ignorant be what envy bear
 Godfrey and Baldwin to Italian fame ?

LXVIII

'But why seek proofs? By yonder heaven I swear,
 And Heaven who heareth will not let me lie,
 At dawn of day I saw his ghost appear—
 An errant, hapless shade, it flitted by.
 Ah, cruel spectacle, and hard to bear!
 What frauds of Godfrey doth it not premise?
 No dream it was—I saw him, and where'er
 I turn my glance, still, still, he haunts mine eyes.

LXIX

'What shall we do, then? Serve the crimson hand
 Still reeking with Rinaldo's guiltless blood?
 Or from hence travel to that distant land,
 Thro' which the Euphrates rolls its golden flood,
 And thro' a fertile plain lush plenty pours
 For the unwarlike race that lines its banks?
 Nay, for ourselves; for it we may make ours,
 Nor hold divided empire with the Franks.

LXX

'If such your will, away! Revenge withhold
 For the youth's innocent, illustrious blood;
 Tho', if that valour, which is now so cold,
 Possessed the warmth and spirit that it should,
 This pestilential and malignant snake,
 Who thus the pride of Italy devours,
 Would by his death a good example make
 To every tyrant in this world of ours.

LXXI

'I—I would, if your ancient valour dared,
 And had the will, as it still has the way,
 That his false heart, that nest of treason, shared
 Rinaldo's fate, thro' this my arm, to-day.'
 Thus frenzied spoke, and with his wild alarms
 And rage, infected all those standing by.
 'Arms, arms!' he shouts, excitedly. 'Arms, arms!'
 The haughty youth to his appeal reply.

LXXII

'Mid them, with armed right hand, Alecto burst,
And in their breasts poured poison mixed with flame,
Whence, passion, frenzy, and the wolf-like thirst
For blood, more fierce and ravenous became.
Then creeping spreads that noisome pestilence,
Nor sated 'mid the Italian quarters stands,
But, passing onwards, taints the Swiss, and thence
Its venom scatters 'mid the British bands.

LXXIII

Nor did the public loss and his hard fate
Alone arouse the foreign legions' ire ;
Old causes their new wrath exasperate,
And add fresh fuel to their present fire ;
Their dormant rancour grows regenerate ;
The Franks, as impious tyrants, they arraign ;
In haughty threats bursts forth, unmasked, their hate,
Nor any longer can repressed remain.

LXXIV

Thus water boiling in a brazen cup,
From fire too ardent, gurgles, smokes, and roars,
Nor can contain itself, but bubbles up
Ev'n to the brim, o'er which it foaming pours ;
Too few were those, enlightened by Truth's ray,
To curb the rabble's rage, and from their post
Tancredi and Camillus were away,
William, and the chief captains of the host.

LXXV

The infuriate legions, uncontrolled, to arms
In crowd confused precipitately ran,
To thunder forth war's terrible alarms
The brazen throats of rebel trumps began.
Meanwhile fleet messengers on Godfrey call
To arm himself : they from all quarters ride ;
But gallant Baldwin, ready before all,
Flew at the summons to his brother's side.

LXXVI

Hearing the charge, to heaven he raised his eyes,
 And, as his wont, sought refuge in the Lord.
 'Oh, God ! who know'st the zeal that in me lies,
 And how by me is civil strife abhorred,
 From their benighted minds the veil remove,
 And curb the fury that transports them so ;
 And as 'tis known to thee and thine above,
 Let the blind world, that I am guiltless, know.'

LXXVII

He ceased, and felt a strange unwonted heat
 Course thro' his veins, by Heaven itself infused,
 Whence, with firm hope and strength sublime replete,
 That made him bolder and his brow suffused,
 Girt by his friends, he straight advanced 'gainst those
 Who thought to vindicate Rinaldo's cause ;
 Nor, tho' the din of threats and arms arose,
 Did pious Godfrey for a moment pause.

LXXVIII

He had his corslet on, and was bedight
 With pomp unwonted in a princely vest ;
 Unarmed his hands and face were, and the light
 Of divine majesty was there expressed ;
 The golden sceptre of command he shook,
 And thought with that their fury to confound :
 Such he appeared to them, nor, as he spoke,
 Did his rapt voice like that of mortal's sound.

LXXIX

'What empty menaces are these I hear ?
 Whence this vain clash of arms ? Who urged you on ?
 Is it thus your well-tried captain you revere ?
 Is it thus from such long trial he is known,
 That there are those who Godfrey would suspect,
 Of fraud accuse him, and approve it too ?
 Perhaps there are among you who expect
 That I would reason, cringe, and pray to you ?

LXXX

' Ah, Heaven forbid such base indignity
 The world, that echoes with my name, should hear !
 No ; let this mace and Truth my guardians be,
 And the proud memory of my past career.
 Still justice shall to clemency give place,
 Nor on the guilty will I vengeance take ;
 Your former merits shall this crime efface,
 I pardon you for your Rinaldo's sake.

LXXXI

' Alone Argillan's blood must expiate
 The common crime ; its author he who, led
 By lightest doubts, did others instigate
 To the same error, and the evil spread.'
 Flashes of honour and command appeared
 To light his princely brow as thus he spoke,
 So that, confounded, Argillano feared
 The wrath (who would believe it ?) of a look.

LXXXII

And they, so insolent and bold before,
 Who bursting were with passion and with pride,
 Who with such promptitude the falchion bore,
 The spear and torch that demon wrath supplied,
 Were speechless, hearing his imperious words,
 Nor dared, thro' shame and fear, look from the ground ;
 And, tho' protected by encircling swords,
 They let Argillan by his guards be bound.

LXXXIII

A lion thus, that shakes his horrid mane,
 And thunders forth his haught defiant roar,
 If he his former master see again,
 Who tamed the fierceness he possessed of yore,
 Submissive, bears the yoke's ignoble weight,
 By stern command and menace terrified ;
 Nor can great hide, teeth, claws, however great,
 Arouse his spirit or bring back his pride.

LXXXIV

'Tis said a wingèd warrior was seen,
Of threatening attitude and rigid look,
Holding a guardian shield, wherewith to screen
The pious Godfrey, while his right arm shook
A naked sword that lightened in his hand,
And with still fresh ensanguined blood-gouts smoked,
The blood, perchance, of city or of land
That had Heaven's long-enduring wrath provoked.

LXXXV

The tumult thus appeased, all cast aside
Their arms, and with them most their ill-intent.
On various thoughts and projects occupied,
Godfrey returned to the imperial tent,
Since he determined to assault the town
Before the second or third day was spent ;
Inspected then the beams that were cut down,
Into war's dread machines already bent.

CANTO IX.

I

BUT the infernal monster who beheld
Their stormy bosoms calm, and anger spent,
And saw 'gainst Fate how vainly she rebelled,
Or tried to change the changeless Mind's intent,
Departs ; and where her shadow passes, dries
The smiling fields, and pales the sun's pure light ;
And for some further hellish enterprise
Bearing fresh ills and fury, hastes her flight.

II

She who, from the arts of her foul consorts, knew
That the Frank camp had for the moment lost
Berthold's son and Prince Tancredi too,
With the most brave and dreaded of the host,
Exclaimed, ' Why longer wait ? Let Solyman
Fall on them now, and strike a sudden blow.
I hope, nay, feel most certain we should gain
An easy triumph o'er the weakened foe.'

III

This said, she 'mid the errant squadrons flew,
Where, chief self-made, encamped was Solyman—
That Solyman than whom was not, she knew,
Of all God's rebels a more desperate one,
Nor had been—no ; though earth again rebelled,
And for fresh strife renewed her Titans. He
Was the Turks' king, and in Nicæa held
The seat supreme of his authority.

IV

And from the Sangar to Meander spread
His broad dominions towards the Grecian coast,
By Mysians, Phrygians, Lydians tenanted,
By Pontus' people and Bithynia's host ;
But when against the Turks and their allies
The Pilgrim armies into Asia passed,
In general action he was worsted twice,
His throne subverted, and his lands laid waste.

V

Once more his fortune having vainly tried,
And being constrained to fly, the battle lost,
To Egypt's king for shelter he applied,
Who proved a friendly and magnanimous host ;
Delighted he that warrior so brave,
Offered himself as comrade in the emprise,
He being determined Palestine to save,
And thwart the Christians of their sought-for prize.

VI

But ere he openly to them declared
The bitter war he meant to prosecute,
He willed, with largess for that purpose spared,
That Solyman the Arabs should recruit.
Thus while each day his host more numerous grew,
From Moorish tribes and Asiatic hordes,
With ease the soldan to his standard drew
The greedy Arabs' mercenary swords.

VII

Whence made their captain, with his lawless host
He overran and plundered Judah, so
That 'twixt the Christian army and the coast
Was barred communication to and fro ;
And brooding o'er his wrongs and the dire fate
Of his subverted empire, he revolved
Within his burning breast exploits more great,
But how to effect them, wavered, unresolved.

VIII

To him came fierce Alecto ; as a man
 Advanced in life the infernal fiend appeared,
 'Neath whose seamed skin no genial currents ran ;
 His chin was shorn, his lip displayed a beard,
 A folded turban round his head was tied,
 An ample robe fell down his knees below,
 A scimeter hung jangling at his side,
 His back a quiver bore, his hand a bow.

IX

'We,' she exclaimed, 'are passing thro' this plain
 Of sterile sands, thro' trackless unknown ways,
 Where we can neither plunder get, nor gain
 Victory deserving of the faintest praise,
 While Godfrey shakes the city, and the wall
 Has breached already with his thundering towers ;
 Yes, we shall see, if more we loiter, fall
 On it the fiery ruin of the Giaours.

X

'What then—shall flocks and herds, and cabins fired,
 The exalted trophies of the soldan be ?
 Is it thus thy kingdom will be reacquired,
 And thus revenged the outrages on thee ?
 Up, up ! take heart, and in his camp surprise
 The tyrant, under covert of the night ;
 In exile trust thy Araspes, nor despise
 Counsels, that thou, when reigning, hast found right.

XI

'He nor expects, nor fears us ; nay, he slights
 The timorous Arabs, naked as they are,
 Nor deems that those accustomed but to flights,
 To raids and rapine, such a feat would dare ;
 But brave they will be by thy bravery made,
 Nor fear a camp unarmed, in sleep reclined.'
 In him her burning fury she conveyed,
 As thus she spake, then mingled with the wind.

XII

Raising his hands to heaven, the warrior spoke :
‘ Oh thou whose fury doth my own excite,
Not man thou art, tho’ mortal be thy look ;
Behold, I follow where thy words invite ;
I’ll go, and mountains raise where now is plain,
Mountains of dead and wounded I’ll erect,
Rivers of blood I’ll make ; but ah, remain,
And thro’ the lightless air my arms direct.’

XIII

This said, the crowds he mustered, while his words
The vile incited, and cheered on the slow ;
And his example fired the Arab hordes
With his own warmth to march against the foe.
Then gave Alecto the trump’s signal blast,
And the great standard with her own hands freed ;
Marched the fleet host, nay sped, so that they passed
The flight of Fame in their precipitate speed.

XIV

Alecto led, then left the army, dressed
A courier like in aspect and array,
And at the time when Nature seems to rest,
Divided dubious between night and day,
Entered Jerusalem, and passing thro’
The sad crowds, told the king, to his delight,
Of the camp’s coming ; told their purpose, too,
And the hour and signal of the assault by night.

XV

The shadows now a veil of horror spread,
Besprent and tinted of a blood-red hue ;
The earth, in place of white hoar-frost, was red
With reeking vapours of ensanguined dew ;
In heaven strange prodigies and monsters soared,
Yelled fiends malign in their exultant flight ;
Grim Pluto emptied hell’s abyss, and poured
From gloomy Tartarus his blackest night.

XVI

Thro' such deep horrors the fierce soldan bent
 His venturous progress toward the hostile lines ;
 But when the night had reached her mid ascent,
 From which she after rapidly declines,
 He arrived within a mile, where in their tents
 Secure the Christians slept—there made a halt,
 Refreshed his troops, and from an eminence
 Addressed and cheered them on to the assault.

XVII

' Behold, my friends, a camp more famed than strong,
 With spoil surcharged, and surfeited with stealth,
 Which, as a ravening sea has swept along,
 And in its maw absorbed all Asia's wealth :
 This the kind fates at your disposal hold
 (Nor could the risk be from less peril free) ;
 Armour, and steeds with crimson pranked, and gold,
 Not their defence, but shall your plunder be.

XVIII

' Not this the host that, formerly so strong,
 O'erthrew the Persians and Nicæa won ;
 Since most in war, so varied and so long,
 Stretched on the field, their earthly race have run.
 And were it ev'n entire, in slumbers deep
 Immersed profoundly, and unarmed, it bides ;
 And small resistance can they make who sleep,
 Since short the pass that sleep from death divides.

XIX

' On, then ! come on ! I first within the line,
 Over their languid forms will clear the way ;
 Let every Paynim falchion strike like mine,
 Let each unequalled cruelty display,
 And this very day the reign of Christ will fall,
 Become illustrious you, and Asia free.'
 Thus to their trials near he fired them all,
 And then advanced his squadrons silently.

XX

When, lo ! before him sentinels he spies,
Thro' the thick shadows of uncertain light,
And finds he cannot, as he hoped, surprise
The prudent chief, tho' coming in the night.
Back they retreated, shouting loud alarms,
By the vast numbers he conducted, scared ;
So that, aroused, the outposts seized their arms,
And for the fight, as best they could, prepared.

XXI

Sure of detection now, the Arabs blew
In their barbaric brass, whose horrent clang
Blent with their yells, to heaven's crystallin flew,
And with them neighs and tramp of destriers rang ;
Roared the tall mountains, the deep valleys roared,
Re-echoing their roars the abyss replied ;
Waving hell's torch aloft Alecto soared,
And to the town the appointed sign supplied.

XXII

On dashed the soldan now, and was the first
To reach the guard, confused, disordered still :
With less rapidity doth whirlwind burst,
From out the bowels of a caverned hill ;
River, that tears up palaces and trees,
Lightning, that blasts with its consuming fire,
Earthquake, that fills the world with horror,—these
Are but faint types of his infuriate ire.

XXIII

Ne'er falls his sword, but doth its object hit ;
Nor fully hits, but that it woundeth too ;
Nor wounds, but kills. More I might say of it,
But that the simple truth might seem untrue.
He either heeds not, or dissembles well,
Or the dire strokes of others does not feel ;
Tho' clangs his stricken helmet like a bell,
And flashes horribly the smitten steel.

XXVI

When as alone he had nigh put to flight
 The Christian outposts ; to support his schemes,
 The Arabs rushing forwards join the fight,
 Like the swoln torrent of a thousand streams.
 At this, the Franks retreat with slackened rein,
 Victor and vanquished mixed together go,
 And in disorder the entrenchments gain,
 Where all is filled with ruin, blood, and woe.

XXV

The soldan's casque a frightful dragon decked,
 That outstretched did its scaly neck unfold ;
 With wings extended, and on claws erect,
 It in a circle had its forked tail rolled :
 Three tongues the monster darts ; a livid froth
 It vomits forth, and seems to hiss with ire ;
 And as the combat glows, it burns with wrath,
 And belches forth black smoke and lurid fire.

XXVI

As, 'mid the flashes of a thunder-storm,
 Looks the vexed ocean in the sailor's sight,
 So dreadful shone the impious soldan's form
 To all beholders, 'mid that blaze of light.
 Some seize with dauntless hands the sword ; to flight,
 Others, base cowards, give their trembling heels ;
 Confusion is confounded by the night,
 Which multiplies the danger it conceals.

XXVII

'Mong those whose hearts with greatest courage glowed
 Was old Latinus, on the Tiber born :
 His frame as yet no sign of weakness showed,
 Nor was by failing years or toil outworn.
 Five gallant sons, his like, alongside him,
 Whene'er he went to battle, kept their places,
 Loading with armour, long before their time,
 Their limbs still growing, and their beardless faces ;

XXVIII

And by example of their sire inflamed,
Had whetted their desire and swords for blood.
'Come, boys, where yon Unfaithful,' he exclaimed,
'Pursues our friends in such exulting mood ;
Nor let the carnage he creates restrain
The daring spirit ye have always borne :
For they, my sons, but worthless honour gain,
Unless past horrors the emprise adorn.'

XXIX

Thus her young cubs bloodthirsty lioness
To rapine leads, and peril o'er the plains,
Ere nature's arms their horrid jaws possess,
Ere cruel claws they have, or shaggy manes :
She, by her own, inflames their savage moods
Against the hunter, who imperiously
Disturbs the quiet of their native woods,
Making from thence their weaker tenants fly.

XXX

The imprudent five accompany their sire,
And linked together, Solyman assail,
When, in a single moment, one desire,
One thought almost doth six long spears impel ;
But far too bold the eldest, undismayed,
Flings down his lance, and closes with his foe,
And tries, but vainly, with his trenchant blade
To lay the soldan's powerful charger low.

XXXI

But, as a storm-bound cliff, which proudly soars
O'er the vexed ocean that beneath it raves,
Firm in itself sustains the rage that pours
From angered heaven, the thunder, and the waves ;
So his audacious front preserved that Brave
Unmoved against the swords, against the spears,
And of the youth who struck his charger, gave
The skull between the eyebrows and the ears.

XXXII

Fond Amaranté, with compassionate ruth,
 Flew to support his brother, thus struck down ;
 But idle was the pity of the youth,
 That added to another's death his own,
 Since on his arm down fell the Pagan's sword,
 And sent the pair conjoined to early death.
 Prostrate they sank, and on each other poured
 Their blood, commingled with their parting breath.

XXXIII

Then having cut Sabino's lance in two,
 Which from afar had galled him, in pursuit
 Of the rash boy he pricked his destrier, who
 Caught him, struck down, and trampled under foot ;
 From his young frame the struggling spirit flies
 With many a pang, thus prematurely torn
 From life's sweet-smelling breath and halcyon skies,
 And the gay golden prime of boyhood's morn.

XXXIV

Still living Pico and Laurenté were,
 Who, twin-born, made their father doubly rich,
 And often caused (so like the youthful pair)
 A pleasing error as to which was which ;
 But if fair Nature made this couple one,
 A hard disunion hostile fury made :
 This through the bosom the fierce soldan run,
 That in the dust a headless carcase laid.

XXXV

The wretched father (father now no more,
 Since of so many sons at once deprived !)
 In their five deaths beheld his own ; that hour
 Robbed him of all, no scion now survived.
 Nor know I how, amid such agony,
 Old age could breathe, much less still battle on
 Against such odds ; perhaps he did not see
 The look and struggles of each dying son ;

XXXVI

Perhaps that bitter pang the friendly night
 Concealed in mercy from the old man's view ;
 Still him no hard-earned triumph could requite :
 His sons had perished ; he would perish too.
 Hence lavish grew of his own blood the sire,
 And madly coveted his foe's to drain ;
 Nor know I which was greater, his desire
 To slay the soldan, or himself be slain.

XXXVII

At length he shouted out : ' Is, then, so frail
 This arm of mine that you despise its stroke ?
 That ev'n its greatest efforts can't avail
 'Gainst me your innate fierceness to provoke ?'
 This said, he dealt him a terrific blow
 That through chain armour and steel corslet tore,
 A wound inflicting on his haughty foe,
 From which outspurted streams of tepid gore.

XXXVIII

His sword and ire the fell barbarian steeled
 Against Latinus at that cry, that wound ;
 And pierced his hauberk, having pierced his shield,
 Tho' it with toughest hide was seven times bound,
 Then in his bowels plunged his vengeful sword.
 The wretched father gave one gasp and died,
 While now from mouth and now from wound outpoured
 In flow alternate an ensanguined tide.

XXXIX

As in the Apennines an oak, whose strength
 Long scorned the war of north and eastern breeze,
 Uprooted by unusual storm at length,
 Drags in one common wreck the neighbouring trees ;
 So fell Latinus, and so furious was,
 That with him he dragged numbers to the ground.
 Fit end, that one so violent should cause,
 Ev'n dying, ruinous destruction round.

P

XL

While thus exhaling his internal hate,
 On blood the soldan sated his long fast ;
 The Arabs, as their chief exasperate,
 Into sad plight the Christian warriors cast ;
 Henry, the English knight, and Olopherne,
 Fell 'neath thy hand, Dragutes ; Ariadine
 Did Gilbert and bold Philip overturn
 And put to death, both born upon the Rhine.

XLI

Ernesto fell beneath Albazar's mace,
 Engerlan 'neath the sword of Algazel ;
 But who could note each death's peculiar case,
 Or count the ignoble multitudes that fell ?
 At the first barbarous yells Prince Godfrey woke,
 Nor from that moment had remained supine ;
 Already armed, a powerful force he took,
 And at their head led on the impatient line.

XLII

When to their yells he heard the din, that grew
 Each moment louder, he at once surmised
 That, to their black perfidious nature true,
 The Arab robbers had the camp surprised ;
 For, well-informed, the cautious captain knew
 They were marauding round the neighbouring lands,
 Still scarcely deemed that such a rabble crew
 Would venture to attack his regular bands.

XLIII

Meanwhile he hears, as further on he goes,
 ' To arms ! ' from the other side—' To arms ! ' reply,
 At the same time that barbarous yells arose
 In most unearthly discord to the sky.
 This was Clorinda, who the king's own guard
 Led to the assault, Arganté at her side ;
 Whence, turning round to noble Guelph, who warred
 As his lieutenant, the commander cried :

XLIV

'Hark ! hark ! how from the city and the hill
Swell the fresh blasts of clanging battle ; there
Is need of all thy valour and thy skill
The first fierce onset of the foe to bear.
Fly, then, at once, and for all risks provide,
Part of my force can follow in thy train ;
Meanwhile I will, upon the other side,
With the other part the hostile shock sustain.'

XLV

This settled, equal Fortune led the pair
Of noble warriors by a diverse path ;
Guelph to the hill advanced, the captain where
The Arab now no opposition hath ;
But he, acquiring, as he goes, fresh strength,
At every step increasing numbers gained,
Till, grown a powerful host, he reached at length
The spot where Solyman destruction rained.

XLVI

Thus from his native hills, in gentle course,
The Po descends, nor fills his narrow bed,
But greater grows the farther from his source,
Till, proudly teeming, by fresh torrents fed,
O'er the burst banks his bull-like brow he rears,
O'ercoming all resistance in his sweep ;
And Adria's billows butting back, appears
To carry war, not tribute to the deep.

XLVII

Where'er his flying troops caught Godfrey's eye,
Thither to rally them, he rode apace,
Shouting : ' What fear is this ? ah, whither fly ?
At least see who it is that gives you chase ;
A rabble herd pursues, that knows not how
To give or take a blow upon the face ;
Alone the lightning of your looks would cow
(If but against them turned) that craven race.'

XLVIII

This said, he pricked his steed, and galloped where
 Round him the soldan fiery ruin spread,
 Cutting his way thro' many a bristling square,
 Thro' carnage, dust, and mountains of the dead ;
 Nor failed his sword and steed which he bestrode
 A passage thro' their closest ranks to force ;
 Down, down to earth on either side he mowed
 Armed men and arms, the horseman and the horse !

XLIX

On, on his destrier bounded, vault on vault,
 O'er piled up mounds of slaughtered Saracens ;
 The intrepid soldan, who the fierce assault
 Perceived approaching, flies not nor declines,
 But gallops forward, and prepared to smite
 Draws near, uplifting his red sword on high ;
 O what two cavaliers the fates unite,
 From earth's antipodes their strength to try !

L

In narrow lists 'gainst Valour Fury fights
 For Asia's empire ; but what tongue can tell
 How desperate was the encounter of those knights,
 Or say how swift and strong their falchions fell ?
 I pass untold the horrors that were done,
 Screened as they were by dark invidious night,
 Tho' worthy they of noontide's brightest sun,
 And that a world were witness of the sight.

LI

The Christians following their intrepid guide,
 Imbibe his spirit and dash boldly on,
 And a dense squadron of his best armed ride
 Around the homicidal Solyman.
 Nor more the Faithful than the Infidel,
 Nor more of those than these bedewed the plain ;
 Alike the victors and the vanquished fell,
 They slew in equal numbers and were slain.

LII

As with like strength and rage, in stubborn fray,
The south wind here, there blustering Boreas blows,
Nor will they give unto each other way,
But cloud to cloud and wave to wave oppose.
So was beheld that fierce and obstinate fight,
Where neither side would bend, and neither yield ;
They clash in rancorous hatred and despite,
'Gainst helmet, shield and sword—sword, helm and
shield.

LIII

Nor less upon the other side was dense
The array of troops, or fierce the combat ; there
A thousand clouds of hell's belligerents
Entirely filled the spacious fields of air,
And gave such courage to the Infidel,
That there were none who meditate retreat ;
Arganté burned beneath the torch of hell,
Nor wanted that to inflame his native heat.

LIV

He had driven back the vanguard of the Cross,
And entered the entrenchments at a vault,
And filled with lacerated limbs the fosse,
To make an easier path for the assault ;
So that the others followed him, and dyed
The tents they encountered first vermilion red.
Clorinda kept her station at his side,
Or little after, scorning to be led.

LV

The Franks were now in flight, when in the brunt,
Prince Guelpho galloped with his gallant band ;
He quickly made the fugitives change front,
The enfeloned Arabs' fury to withstand.
Thus raged the battle: blood in rivers flowed,
As much on one as on the other side,
When heaven's Great King from His sublime abode
His eyes cast down, and the fierce fight descried.

LVI

There dwelleth He who, good and just, from there
 Gives laws to all, all makes and ornaments
 Above the confines of this narrow sphere,
 Beyond dull reason's reach or mortal's sense ;
 And on Eternity's majestic seat,
 Resplendent shines, three several lights in one.
 Nature and Fate crouch humbly at His feet,
 Motion, and He who counts the moments gone,

LVII

And Space, and She, who at His slightest nod,
 Whirls and destroys as dust or lightest air
 Gold, empires, earthly glory ; and as God
 Disdains for anger of vain man to care,
 There with such radiant splendour is He crowned,
 That dazzled are the purest in His sight ;
 His throne unnumbered Seraphim surround,
 Whom equal joys unequally requite.

LVIII

Now as resounding through the heavenly halls
 Rings the full concord of their strains divine,
 The King of kings the archangel Michael calls,
 Whose arms of lucent diamond brightly shine ;
 'Perceiv'st thou not how hell's foul fiends,' He said,
 'Gainst my dear faithful flock their arms have hurled,
 And from the low abysses of the dead,
 Have upwards risen to disturb the world ?

LIX

'Go, tell them henceforth to give up the care
 Of war to warriors as is fair and right,
 Nor spread disturbance, nor pollute the air
 Of earth below, nor heaven's pure regions blight ;
 Let them return to their just punishment,
 And Acheron's gloom, their fit abode, regain,
 And there themselves and all lost souls torment ;
 Thus have I 'stablished, thus I now ordain.'

LX

The winged archangel at these words inclined
Low at His feet divine, with reverence fraught,
Then spread his golden pinions to the wind,
So rapid they as to exceed all thought.
The fire he passed and realms of light where dwelled
The blest in their immovable abode,
Next the crystallin and pure cirque beheld,
That rolling round, with stars unnumbered glowed.

LXI

Now on the left saw Jove and Saturn roll,
Differing in motion and distinct in sight,
And the others that can't deviate from their goal,
Since moved and quickened by celestial might ;
Then passed from cloudless realms of endless day,
Shining and bright, whence thunder falls and rain,
To where the world now feeds and melts away,
Dies in its struggles now—now lives again ;

LXII

And came dividing with immortal plume
The darkness dense and dreariness profound,
Gilding with light divine the horrid gloom ;
Light which his face in sparks diffused around ;
Thus after showers of rain the god of day,
The humid clouds with sheen prismatic dyes ;
So cleaves a shooting star the liquid way,
And on earth's lap, falls headlong from the skies.

LXIII

But when arrived where hell's accursed crew
To the Turks' rage fresh stimulants applied,
He sudden stopped, ev'n as in air he flew,
Brandished his lance, and thus indignant cried :
'What ! have ye still to learn how terribly
God hurls His bolts ? What ! 'gainst His sovran Will,
Tho' racked by pangs of extreme misery,
Live ye still hardened and rebellious still ?

LXIV

'Tis fixed in Heaven that at the Cross's sign,
 Sion shall bow her walls and ope her gates :
 Why then provoke the Almighty's wrath divine,
 Why any longer battle with the Fates?
 Begone, accursed, to your dark realm—begone,
 To pains and death in perpetuity,
 And in those regions which are all your own,
 Your future battles and your triumphs be.

LXV

'Go, vent your cruelty in hell beneath ;
 There the damned torture with your deadliest pains,
 'Mid shrieks eternal, and the gnash of teeth,
 The clash of iron, and of clanking chains.'
 This said, he drove out with his fatal lance
 Those whom he saw reluctant to take flight.
 With many a groan, they left the fair expanse
 Of golden stars and everlasting light,

LXVI

And spread their wings towards hell's eternal night,
 The damned to harry with fresh tortures. Ne'er
 Passes the sea of birds so great a flight,
 When gathering they to warmer climes repair ;
 Nor on the ground so many leaves to fall
 At the first cold of autumn's frosts are seen.
 The world, delivered from their baneful thrall,
 Her gloomy look casts off, and smiles again.

LXVII

Yet not for this his courage and his ire,
 In the fierce bosom of Arganté sank,
 Altho' no more Alecto breathed her fire,
 Or with her scourge infernal lashed his flank.
 His ruthless steel he whirled where'er the crowd
 Of Franks was thickest, and with equal blow
 Mowed down both great and small, and the most proud
 And lofty heads laid level with the low.

LXVIII

Not far Clorinda is, nor seemeth less
With severed limbs to strew that scene of strife :
Berlinger's breast she pierced with rare address
Right to the heart—abode of fragile life,
And drove the blade so home, that all imbued
With gout of gore, it issued from his back ;
Next Albin struck where first the child takes food ;
Cleft Gallo's face, nor paused in her attack ;

LXIX

But Gernier's hand, that erst herself did wound,
Lopped from his arm, cast bleeding on the plain,
The trembling fingers quivered on the ground,
And struggled still the falchion to retain :
Like tail of serpent that attempts in vain,
When from its body severed, to unite.
Disabled thus she left him, and amain
Turned on Achilles, and with all her might,

LXX

Planted between his nape and neck a blow,
Which the nerves cutting thro', the windpipe tore,
Whence circling round, the head fell down below,
The face begriming with foul dust, before
The trunk itself had fallen, which still remained
Firm in its seat (heart-rending spectacle !)
Until, no longer by the curb restrained,
The destrier plunging flung it from the selle.

LXXI

While thus the fierce undaunted amazon
Broke thro', and scourged the squadrons of the West,
Her troops in equal numbers overthrown,
The strength of haught Gildippe's arm confessed.
Alike the spirit, as their sex the same,
That either maiden's valorous bosom nerved ;
But to make proof thereof's not granted them,
Since for a mightier foe by Fate reserved.

LXXII

Here one, there the other charged, yet neither fair
 The serried ranks of her opponents broke ;
 At this Prince Guelpho, with drawn scimeter,
 Approached Clorinda, and a sweeping stroke
 Let drive, and stained somewhat the thirsty blade
 In her fair flank. To his abrupt attack
 One savage thrust she in rejoinder made,
 And 'twixt his ribs the injury paid back.

LXXIII

Guelph struck again, but failed in his intent,
 Since there by chance Osmida, passing by,
 Received the blow for fair Clorinda meant,
 And which his forehead gashed from eye to eye.
 But numbers now of those whom Guelpho led,
 Collecting quickly to his succour flew ;
 Thither two masses of the Pagans sped,
 Whence more tumultuous the contest grew.

LXXIV

Her purple brow already had the dawn
 From heaven's imperial balcony displayed,
 When, 'mid those tumults from his bonds withdrawn,
 Himself had furious Argillano freed ;
 And having round him in his hurry thrown
 The arms that first chance offered to his view,
 He came for recent errors to atone
 By new achievements, and by honours new.

LXXV

As from imperial stalls a generous steed,
 There kept for purposes of war, repairs,
 Scouring the country round, to seek, now freed,
 The well-known stream, the pastures, and the mares,
 Aloft, exulting, his haught crest he throws,
 O'er which his mane in folds luxuriant plays ;
 Earth rings beneath his tramp—he snorts, he glows,
 And fills the welkin with sonorous neighs ;

LXXVI

Such came Argillan ; so he tossed his head,
So burned his glance, and with a step so fleet,
He bounding forward to the battle sped,
As scarce to imprint the dust beneath his feet ;
The foe addressing with the indifference
Of one that dareth all and heedeth nought :
'Dregs of the world ! vile inept Arabs ! whence
Have ye so much unusual courage caught ?

LXXVII

'To bear the shield, or helmet's weight unfit,
Or back or breast with armour to enclose,
Half naked and affrighted, ye commit
To speed your safety, to the winds your blows ;
By aid of night are your achievements done,
Courage alone in darkness you acquire.
Where is your refuge, now that she is gone ?
Arms and more solid valour you require.'

LXXVIII

Ere he had finished, Algazel he smote
Upon the neck with such severity,
That the fell scimeter transfix'd his throat,
And quashed the word just rising in reply.
A sudden horror veiled the wretch's eyes,
An icy coldness ran through every vein ;
He falls, and, filled with fury, as he dies,
Malign, spiteful, bites the odious plain.

LXXIX

He then by various modes did Saladin,
And Agricalt, and Muleasses kill,
And with one stroke divided to the chine
One who stood near, by name Aldiazil.
Piercing his breast, he struck down Ariadne,
And did his fall with bitter taunts deride ;
He, looking up, while on the ground supine,
Thus to his haught, contemptuous words replied :

LXXX

'Not thou, whoe'er thou art, shall triumph long
 In this my death ; proud conqueror, for thee
 Like fate is preordained ; an arm more strong
 Shall stretch thy lifeless carcass beside me.'
 Grimly he smiled, and answered him : ' Let God
 Care for my lot ; meanwhile die thou, and feast
 The dogs and birds ; then on his body trod,
 And with one tug, both steel and soul released.

LXXXI

Among the archers and the lancers rode
 One of the pages of King Solyman,
 On whose smooth chin no indication showed
 That spring to strew its first flowers had begun ;
 The sweat that moistened his soft cheeks was fair
 As glistening dew-drops or bright pearls ; fresh grace
 The dust imparted to his unkempt hair,
 And anger ev'n looked charming in his face.

LXXXII

The graceful stripling rode a destrier, white
 As snow fresh fallen upon the Apennines ;
 Less swift is whirlwind, rising flame less light,
 Than it to wheel and curvet through the lines :
 Grasped by the middle, he a javelin bore,
 A scimeter hung jangling at his side ;
 Tunic of purple, gold-inwove, he wore,
 That shone resplendent with barbaric pride.

LXXXIII

While the young boy, whose heart the new delights
 Of glory charmed, endeavoured to molest,
 By dashing in among them, the Frank knights,
 Nor was there any could his course arrest,
 Argillan watched his opportunity
 To launch his spear, as round and round he flies—
 Caught it, and slew his destrier stealthily,
 And o'er him stood, before he had time to rise,

LXXXIV

And 'gainst his suppliant face, which vainly strove
Itself with arms of pity to defend,
The inexorable steel Argillan drove
The choicest gift of Nature to offend ;
But the sword seemed more human than the man,
Since, turning, it fell flat ; but what availed
The sabre's ruth, since with fresh force he ran
Him thro' the place where he at first had failed ?

LXXXV

But Solymano, who, not far from there
Engaged in battle had with Godfrey been,
Forsook the fight, and turned his destrier,
Soon as he had his page's peril seen,
And quickly oped thro' closest crowds a lane,
For vengeance—yes, but for assistance—no,
Since he beheld—ah, grief!—his Lesbin slain,
Like a fair flower in bloom of youth laid low.

LXXXVI

So gently did his trembling eyelids close,
And droop so gracefully his neck, the youth
So well became his pallor, and the throes
Of death inspired such sympathetic ruth,
That his heart melts, than marble erst more cold,
And, 'mid his anger, scalding tear-drops rise :
What ! weep'st thou, Solyman, that didst behold
Thy realm's destruction with unmoistened eyes ?

LXXXVII

But when he saw the sabre smoking still
With the youth's blood, all pity disappears,
And seethed and burned his maddened anger, till
It dried the very sources of his tears ;
He on Argillan rushed with sword on high,
And cleft opposing shield, helm, head, and throat.
Of Solymano's animosity
That mighty blow did well the strength denote.

LXXXVIII

Nor yet content, upon the inanimate corse
 He sought, dismounted, to do battle ; so
 A mastiff seizes with enfeloned force
 The unconscious stone that gave the cruel blow.
 Vain consolation for o'ermastering grief,
 To wreak one's vengeance on insensate clay !
 Meanwhile not thus the gallant Christian chief
 His blows and anger idly threw away.

LXXXIX

Sheathed in chain armour, iron helm, and shield,
 With Solyman a thousand Turks campaigned,
 Who to fatigue were never known to yield,
 Of dauntless courage and in all points trained ;
 The remnant of his ancient guard they were,
 That in the deserts of wild Araby
 Did aye their liege's hapless fortunes share,
 And still were faithful in adversity.

XC

These in close order linked together, yield
 Little or nothing to the valorous Frank ;
 Among them Godfrey charged, and through his shield,
 Pierced fell Corcuté's face and Rosten's flank ;
 Then from the shoulders severed Selim's head,
 And shore Rossano's right and left arm thro' ;
 Nor these alone beneath his sabre bled,
 Elseways he many maimed and many slew.

XCI

But while he thus attacked the infidel,
 And bore the fury of their slashing swords,
 And in no single point desponding fell
 The hopes and fortunes of the barbarous hordes,
 Lo ! a fresh cloud of ominous dust draws nigh,
 Big with the rattling thunderbolts of war ;
 From gleaming arms, lo ! sudden flashes fly,
 That panic strike the Saracen. They are

XCII

Fifty Crusaders, that, in silver clad,
Display the purple and triumphant Cross ;
Not if a hundred mouths and tongues I had,
And lungs of iron and an iron voice,
Could I recount the numbers that were slain
By the first charge of that impetuous troop :
The unwarlike Arab falls, the Turk in vain
Resists, and sinks beneath their lightning swoop.

XCIII

Horror, affright, despair, and cruelty
Stalk round the battle-field ; in varied guise,
Triumphant Death in every part you see,
And lakes of blood, in crimson billows, rise.
As tho' presaging failure, with his train
The king already had passed thro' the gate,
And from a height beheld the subject plain,
Where battle trembled in the scales of Fate.

XCIV

But when he saw the main force wavering, he
Sounds the recall, and from the direful wrack
Commands, with iterated urgency,
Arganté and Clorinda to fall back.
At first the savage couple disobeyed,
Blinded with rage, and drunk and mad with ire ;
At last they yielded, but too late essayed
To make the troops more orderly retire.

XCV

For who can rule a crowd, or govern fright,
Or give faint-hearted cowards confidence ?
They fling away their arms and take to flight ;
The sword is now a burden, not defence.
From west to south extends a rugged vale
Between the town and camp ; to this they fly,
While, towards the walls, borne onwards by the gale,
Black clouds of dust obscure the azure sky.

XCVI

As down the steep they rushed, upon their rear
 The Christians hanging, frightful carnage made,
 But afterwards, when mounting, they were near,
 And had received the barbarous tyrant's aid,
 Guelph, at such disadvantage, would not run
 The risk of forcing the precipitous height,
 And checked his troops; the king withdrew his own,
 No small remains of that disastrous fight.

XCVII

Meanwhile, the soldan had done all Heaven grants
 To strength of mortal man; he can no more.
 His flanks upheave, as out of breath he pants,
 And down his face run streams of sweat and gore;
 'Neath the shield's weight declines his languid arm;
 The sluggish steel can no effect produce;
 It breaks, but cuts not—blunt, it does no harm;
 The sabre now has lost a sabre's use.

XCVIII

And feeling this, he ponders in the act
 Of one that 'twixt two projects doubtful stands;
 Whether to die, and of that glorious fact
 Rob others by his suicidal hands;
 Or, if surviving this disaster, wait,
 And place his person in security.
 At length he cried, 'To thee I yield me, Fate!
 Let this my flight sign of thy triumph be.

XCIX

'Let the foe see my back, and again spurn
 Our exile now, provided that again
 He live to see me, armed anew, return
 To vex his peace and never 'stablished reign.
 I yield not—no; but as my injuries
 Undying are, so my despite shall be;
 Tho' die this flesh, my fleshless ghost shall rise
 From out the grave, still deadlier enemy.'

CANTO X.

I

WHILE speaking thus, he spied upon the plain
A steed direct towards him its errant course :
At once he laid his hand upon the rein,
And vaulted up, tho' weak, upon the horse.
Drooped is that crest which erst so fiercely rose
Leaving the helm undignified and base ;
Torn is his surcoat, and no longer shows
Of its once regal pomp the slightest trace.

II

As skulks away and hides himself a wolf
(Driven from a sheep-fold), in the sheltering wood,
Who, tho' he have his stomach's greedy gulf
Filled to repletion, still athirst for blood
The ravening glutton lolls his red tongue out,
And from his slavering lips licks off the gore ;
So slunk the soldan from that bloody rout,
Tho' gorged with blood, still covetous for more.

III

Escaping, as by Providence ordained,
The clouds of arrows that around him flew,
From swords, and spears, and instruments that rained
Destruction round, in safety he withdrew.
Then, wandering on, unheeded and unknown,
The tracks most wild and unfrequented sought,
Revolving what was wisest to be done,
In a fierce tempest of distracting thought.

Q

IV

At length he fixed to go where Egypt's king
His mighty host assembles, and unite
With him his arms, and their leagued forces bring
To try the fortune of another fight.
Resolved on this, he makes no vain delay,
But thither by the shortest road proceeds ;
Nor needeth guide, since he well knows the way
That to the coast of antique Gaza leads.

V

Nor, tho' his wounds torment him, and the blows
Dealt so severely in the late affray,
Will he his armour doff, or seek repose,
But in sore travail spends the livelong day.
At length, when night earth's various colours took,
And all converted into one black suit,
Dismounting, he bound up his wounds, and shook
From a high palm, as best he could, the fruit.

VI

Refreshed therefrom, upon the naked field
His jaded limbs to accommodate he sought,
And his head pillowed on his iron shield,
To calm the throbbings of o'erwearied thought.
But, as each moment passed, still more and more
He felt his wounds' uneasiness and pain ;
Gnawed is his bosom, rent his heart's proud core,
By the inward vultures, sorrow and disdain.

VII

At length, when buried in Cimmerian gloom
Of deepest night, all things were calm around,
And he too, by exhaustion overcome,
In Lethe had his carking troubles drowned,
And, in a brief and fitful sleep, composed
His heavy limbs and eyes,—in tones severe
A voice, even while the wearied warrior dozed
And caught some rest, thus thundered in his ear :

VIII

' O Solymano, for a happier hour
 And fitter time, thy slothful slumbers save,
 Since, 'neath the yoke of the accursed Giaour,
 The land, once ruled by thee, is still a slave.
 Canst on this earth repose thy sluggard head,
 While here such marks of thy disgrace remain ?
 While blanch the bones of thy unburied dead,
 Canst idly wait till morn return again ?'

IX

Awaked, the soldan lifts his eyes, and sees
 One with appearance of extreme old age,
 With a curved staff support his tottering knees
 And guide his steps, and asks him in his rage :
 ' What wantest here ? and tell me who art thou,
 Intrusive spirit, that has dared to break
 The brief repose of travellers ? and how
 Can my revenge or shame thy interest wake ?'

X

' I, said the hoary sage, ' am one, to whom
 Is known, at least in part, thy new design ;
 And, as a friend more careful of thee, come,
 Than in thy ignorance thou mayst opine.
 Nor idle are the biting truths I preach,
 Since wrath is valour's whetstone ; whence, good sir,
 Kindly receive these words, and let my speech
 Act on thy ready heart as whip and spur.

XI

' As, then, thy steps, if I judge right, are bent
 Toward Egypt's mighty monarch, I forebode
 A rough and useless journey, if intent,
 Thou still persistest to pursue that road.
 The Saracens, ev'n if thou shouldst not go,
 Will soon collect, and march to their allies ;
 Nor place is there, where to employ or show
 Thy valour 'gainst our common enemies.

XII

'But if thou'lt follow me, I pledge my word
To lead thee safely, in the broad day light
(Nor wilt thou have occasion for thy sword),
Within those walls, now girt by Latin might ;
There thou mayst reap the glory and delight
Of struggles 'gainst discomforts and the Giaours,
And Salem hold till, to renew the fight,
The Egyptian army joins its force with ours.'

XIII

The Turk could not, though angry, fail to admire
The old man's eyes and voice, as thus he spoke,
And cast away all trace of pride and ire
From his intolerant thoughts and savage look.
'Ready,' he said, 'to follow thy behest
Am I, O father, nor will e'er recoil ;
And that advice to me will seem the best
Which greatest risks combines with greatest toil.'

XIV

The sage approved ; and since his wounds were chilled
By the night breeze, which rankled them still more,
In them a sovran balsam he instilled,
To staunch the blood, and his lost strength restore ;
When, seeing Apollo light with gold the roses,
Already blushing from Aurora's hues :
''Tis time to leave ; the sun our path discloses,
And the world calls to its diurnal dues.'

XV

To his chariot, then, which waited his command,
He with the fierce Nicæan straight proceeds ;
Mounts, slacks the reins, and with a master hand
Lashes alternately the snorting steeds,
Who fly so swiftly that the dusty plain
No trace preserves of hoof or glowing wheel.
Away, away !—they smoke, they pant, they strain,
Blanching with flecks of foam the burnished steel.

XVI

I will tell marvels : The surrounding air
Was gathered and embodied in a shroud,
Veiling the enchanted chariot, altho' there
Appeared not ev'n the vestige of a cloud ;
Yet rocks could not have pierced its density,
When launched from war's most powerful machine ;
Still from its deep recess they both could see
Around the cloud, beyond the sky serene.

XVII

The warrior gazed in mute bewilderment,
With brow contracted and uplifted eye,
At cloud and car, which all impediment
So swiftly passed that they appeared to fly.
The sage, who, by his fixed, yet vacant stare,
Perceived his stupor, the dead silence broke,
Calling the prince from his abstracted air,
Who with an effort roused himself, and spoke :

XVIII

' Whoe'er thou art, that, passing mortal skill,
To strange unearthly use doth Nature bind,
And, secrets scanning, rangest at thy will
Thro' the most dark recesses of the mind ;
If, with the knowledge that thy God bestows,
Thou canst things hidden and remote foresee,
Ah, tell me, pray, amid her mighty throes,
Is peace or ruin Asia's destiny ?

XIX

' But first reveal thy name, and by what art
Thou doest things that mortal powers transcend ;
But if this stupor does not first depart,
How to thy other words can I attend ?'
The old man smiled : ' In one part not at all
'Tis hard to gratify thy wish. I am hight
Ismeno, and the Syrian people call
Me wizard, since those arts are my delight.

XX

‘ But to unveil the future, and unfold
 The eternal records of hid Destiny,
 Is aim too lofty and desire too bold,
 Nor is such granted to mortality ;
 To face misfortune and contend ’gainst wrong,
 Let each employ his head, and hands, since not
 Unoft it happens that the wise and strong
 Carve for themselves the best and happiest lot.

XXI

‘ Thy unconquered arm (to which it easy were
 To shake the straggling forces of the West,
 Much more to guard the strong position where
 Their ruthless legions Salem’s walls invest)
 Prepare ’gainst fire—prepare, I say, ’gainst arms
 Dare, suffer, trust—my hope is great ; but thee
 I now will tell what should possess great charms,
 And which, obscurely, as thro’ clouds I see.

XXII

‘ I see, or seem to see, before me borne,
 Ere yonder sun thro’ many lustres roll,
 One that will Asia with bright deeds adorn,
 And fruitful Egypt ’neath his sway control.
 I pass in silence, since I scare can see,
 The charms of peaceful arts and leisure hours,
 And all his virtues ; but enough for thee
 That he’ll not only shake the Christian powers,

XXIII

‘ But, in his last proud triumph, from its base
 Will hurl the fabric of their rule unjust,
 And the sad remnant to a narrow place,
 Alone defended by the ocean, thrust.
 He of thy blood will be.’ Here ceased the sage,
 And the other said : ‘ O happy, whom Fate’s voice
 Selects for such a glorious heritage’—
 And tho’ he envies, inly doth rejoice.

XXIV

Adding: 'Let Fortune change, or good or ill,
As is predestined by divine decree,
No power has she to thwart my resolute will,
Nor me, shall ever but undaunted, see ;
The moon and stars shall first their course forsake
Ere I one step from what is just and right
Swerve in the least.' As thus the soldan spake,
His eye-balls flashed with more than mortal light.

XXV

Thus on they went conversing, till they were
Nigh where they saw the Frank pavilions rise.
Ah, cruel spectacle, and hard to bear !
Ah, in what various forms Death met their eyes !
With gloom and anger the fierce soldan's swelled ;
His face grew woe-begone, as, deeply sighing,
In abject degradation he beheld
Upon the ground his once-feared standards lying,

XXVI

And scouring o'er it, Franks, exulting, tread
Upon the face and breast of some known friend,
And scornfully from the unburied dead
Their armour and ill-fated vestments rend ;
O'er their departed comrades some convene
To pay the last sad rites—some carry fire—
And here an intermingled crowd is seen
Of Turks and Arabs feed one common pyre.

XXVII

Deeply he sighed, and, burning for the attack,
Sprang from the chariot with uplifted blade ;
But the old wizard caught and drew him back,
And, having chid his mad resolve, and made
Him mount the car again, his course inclined
To where the mountain rears its lofty flanks.
Thus for a time they journeyed, till behind
They left the entire encampment of the Franks.

XXVIII

They then alighted from the magic car,
 Which vanished ; but, still screened beneath the veil
 Of the same cloud, on foot the adventurous pair
 Leftwards descended thro' a lonely vale,
 Until they reached a spot where, towards the west (7)
 Majestic Sion turns her shoulders ; here
 The wizard halted, and, as if in quest
 Of something hid, the beetling steep drew near.

XXIX

In the hard rock a hollow cavern oped,
 Wrought in the mountain centuries before ;
 But from disuse the aperture was stopped
 By briars and brambles that concealed the door.
 The wizard cleared the way, and, stooping low,
 With body suited to the passage, tried,
 One hand being pilot, through the pass to go,
 And to the prince the other gave as guide.

XXX

Outspake the soldan then : ' What ! thither grope ?
 What end can this thy furtive path afford ?
 Other, it may be, better I could ope,
 By thy permission, with my trusty sword.'
 ' Disdain not thou, fastidious soul,' he said,
 ' Brave tho' thou be, to pass these darksome ways ;
 Since mighty Herod here was wont to tread,
 Whose feats in arms are still the theme of praise.

XXXI

' The king of whom I speak this cavern framed,
 When the unruly Jews he would restrain,
 And thro' it, by that lofty turret, named,
 From his great friend, Antonia, he could gain
 A secure entrance, visible to none,
 Into the massive venerable fane ;
 From thence escape in secret from the town,
 Lead squadrons out and bring them back again.

XXXII

'But to myself, alone of living men,
This dark and solitary path is known ;
We will pass through its secret windings then,
To where the king has gathered round his throne
His wisest councillors. He seems to fear,
More than perhaps he should, the frowns of fate ;
Much needed wilt thou come. In silence hear,
Then, at the fitting time—expostulate.'

XXXIII

With his huge frame, as thus he spoke, the knight
Blocked up the low-roofed cave, and fearless sped
Thro' paths obscured by never-ending night,
Following the wizard wheresoe'er he led.
At first they stooped, but as the little grot
Expanded more the farther they went on,
They mounted with facility and got
To the dark cavern's centre ; whereupon

XXXIV

Ismeno straightway opened a small gate,
And they climbed up a rarely trodden stair,
Whose only light proceeded from a grate
Thro' which stole glimmerings of lack-lustre air ;
At length they reached a cloister underground ;
Thence onward passed into a hall of state,
Where, with his sceptre and with diadem crowned,
'Mid his sad council the sad monarch sat.

XXXV

Hid in the cloud, the Turk, himself unseen,
With eager eyes o'er all the assembly ran,
And heard meanwhile the monarch, Aladine,
Who, from his splendid throne, the first began :
'Truly, my faithful counsellors, the last
Was for our realm a most disastrous day ;
The lofty hopes we formed are well-nigh past ;
Alone from Egypt's aid there gleams one ray.

XXXVI

' But well ye see how that, from peril near,
 The hope is distant, for which reason I
 Have you assembled, that each worthy peer
 May counsel us in this emergency.'
 He ceased, and straight an ominous buzz was heard,
 Like breezes whispering through umbrageous glade,
 When rising up, serene and undeterred,
 Arganté thus the murmuring sounds allayed :

XXXVII

' Magnanimous monarch,' was the proud reply
 Of that undaunted, fiery cavalier,
 ' Why seek to prove us ? why to us apply ?
 No need there is for our opinion here ;
 In our own selves let us alone confide ;
 And if it's true that nothing Virtue harms,
 From her assistance ask, make her our guide ;
 Life let us love not, when she calls to arms.

XXXVIII

' Nor speak I thus that I at all despair
 Of Egypt's speedy and most certain aid ;
 Nor is it right in you, nor is it fair,
 To doubt the promises my liege has made :
 I only speak because I wish to see
 In some of us more dauntless spirits rise,
 Which, prompt alike for every destiny,
 Were pledge of victory and would death despise.'

XXXIX

Those words Arganté spoke, and only those,
 Like one who spoke of no uncertain things ;
 When with commanding air Orcano rose,
 One who, descended from a race of kings,
 In warlike deeds approved himself of yore ;
 But now united to a youthful bride,
 As sire and spouse the battle-field forbore ;
 In home affections all his manhood died.

XL

'Sire,' he exclaimed, 'far be it from me to accuse
The fervour of high-minded words which start
From warm magnanimous impulse, and refuse
To be confined within the swelling heart ;
Whence if his nature too much warmth betrays
When before thee the brave Circassian pleads,
We well his fire may pardon, who displays
An equal fervour in heroic deeds.

XLI

'But 'tis thy duty, whom each added year
And long experience have so prudent made,
To place the curb of thy advice whene'er
He into too great transports is betrayed ;
The hopes to balance of prospective aid
With danger near—nay, present to our view,
And with the arms and charge of Frank brigade,
Thy time-worn rampart and defences new.

XLII

'We have, if freely I may speak my thought,
A city strong by nature and by art,
But against it what huge machines are brought,
What dreadful engines on the adverse part !
The end is doubtful, still I hope, my liege,
Yet dread the war's uncertainty, and fear
If on us pressed a closer state of siege,
That 'mong us famine will at length appear.

XLIII

'For all the stores of cattle and of grain,
That yesterday within the walls were brought,
Was great good fortune, while on yonder plain
The Franks alone to flesh their falchions sought ;
Yet that were poor provision to supply
So large a city, should the siege endure ;
And last it will, tho' Egypt, our ally,
Came on the very day he named as sure.

XLIV

'But what if he delay? Well, well, I grant
That he his promise and thy hope forestalls;
But not for that do I behold him plant
His conquering flag on these beleaguered walls:
We must, O king, with that same Godfrey fight,
With those same chiefs, and those same legions, who
So often have dispersed and put to flight
Turks, Arabs, Persians, and us Syrians, too.

XLV

'And what they are, Arganté, thou shouldst know,
Who didst so often before them retreat,
Who didst so often thy broad shoulders show,
For safety trusting to thy nimble feet;
I also know it, and the warrior maid,
Nor is there one can taunt the other; I
Would none reproach or blame; we all displayed,
As much as mortals could, our bravery.

XLVI

'Aye, tho' Arganté scowls with deadly hate,
Enraged, unwilling the sad truth to hear,
I see, by fixed, inevitable Fate,
The foe conducted to sure goal, and fear
Not hosts unnumbered, not the strongest wall
Will e'er prevent their reign and their command;
And this I say—to witness Heaven I call—
From love of thee and of my native land.

XLVII

'Ah, prudent king of Tripoli! how wise
Both peace and his dominions to retain,
While dead the stubborn soldan is, or lies
Bound by the foot in slavery's galling chain,
Or for still greater miseries reserved,
An exiled, timid runaway, doth smart;
Yet had he yielded part, he had preserved,
By gifts and tribute, the remaining part.'

XLVIII

In such a roundabout and tortuous cloak
Orcano did his covert sense disguise ;
To sue for peace and bend to others' yoke,
He dared not openly the king advise.
But the indignant soldan could no more
Endure his language, or concealed remain,
When the magician whispered him : ' Signor,
Canst tamely hear him speak in such a strain ?'

XLIX

' I, for my part, against my will crouch here,
And burn with rage and shame,' the soldan said.
The angry accents scarcely uttered were
When the cloud's veil that was around them spread,
Dissolving, vanished in the void of space,
And in the light of day he stood confessed ;
With noble spirit shone his haughty face,
As thus the startled council he addressed :

L

' I, whom ye prate of, in your presence stand—
No runaway, no timid soldan I—
And offer now to prove, with this right hand,
That yon vile coward in his throat doth lie ;
I, who of blood such ample torrents poured,
And piled up hills of carnage in the fight,
Hemmed in by foes, without one friend to afford
The least assistance—I accused of flight !

LI

' But should yon wretch, or any such as he,
False to his creed and country, venture but
To hint at league of such indignity—
Thy pardon, sire—I slay him on the spot ;
First lambs and wolves shall mingle in one fold,
And doves and serpents in one nest agree,
Ere the same country Turks and Christians hold,
Without incarnate animosity.'

LII

While speaking thus, in threatening attitude,
On his sword's hilt he kept his fierce right hand ;
Dumb with astonishment, the others viewed
His furious look and savage reprimand.
At length he made obeisance to the king,
With a less wicked and enfeloned brow ;
' Hope ! ' he exclaimed ; ' no trifling aid I bring :
Prince Solyman, my liege, is with thee now.'

LIII

King Aladine, who had to greet him sped,
Answered : ' How welcome is thy presence here ;
I feel not now the loss of thousands dead,
Dear friend, and I began the worst to fear.
Thou canst my throne secure, and in brief space
The fallen condition of thine own renew,
If Heaven forbid not.' Then in close embrace
Around his neck his circling arms he threw.

LIV

Their greeting over, his own chair of state
The king conceded to the great Nicene,
Then placed himself upon the left, while sate
Close at his side the sapient seer, Ismene ;
But while the monarch asked him to disclose
The news, and he complied with his request,
To honour Solyman Clorinda rose
First of the court, then followed all the rest ;

LV

'Mong them Ormusses, he who undertook
To guide his Arab troop, and while the blaze
Of war burned fiercest, the high road forsook,
And wound about so amid blind by-ways,
That, favoured by the silence and the shade,
At length he brought them safe into the town,
And, with the forage captured in the raid,
Afforded succour to the garrison.

LVI

With scowl that his disdainful dudgeon shows,
Sole stayed Arganté, motionless and mute,
Like a majestic lion in repose,
That rolls his eyes, but stirreth not a foot ;
Orcano hung his crest-fallen head, nor could
The withering glance of Solyman withstand.
In council thus the Syrian tyrant stood,
The Turkish king, and magnates of the land.

LVII

But Godfrey, following up his victory,
Had cleared the passes as the vanquished fled,
And had ordained that the last honours be
Rendered meanwhile to the illustrious dead ;
And now commands that on the second day
The troops be ready to assault the walls,
And with war's fiercest, deadliest display
The close-invested Saracen appals.

LVIII

And since he recognised the troop that came
To his assistance, 'gainst the infidel,
Consisted of his dearest friends, the same
That followed the insidious syren's spell ;
And with them Prince Tancredi, who was thrown
Into vile bondage by Armida's hand ;
Before the hermit and some friends alone
He straightway summoned that adventurous band.

LIX

Arrived, ' Pray one of you,' he said, ' declare
The uncertain course of your brief wandering,
And by what fortune ye enabled were
In such great need such great relief to bring.'
Ashamed, they hung their heads, for all begun
To feel what bitter thoughts slight error woke ;
At length the British king's illustrious son,
Raising his brow, the painful silence broke.

LX

' Departed we, who were not drawn by lot,
 Each following furtively, alone, the trace—
 The trace fallacious, I deny it not—
 Of loadstone Love, of fair insidious face ;
 But as we went thro' many a tortuous pass,
 Among us discords sprang and jealousies,
 Our love fomented and our hate (alas !
 Too late, I knew it) by her words and eyes.

LXI

' At length we reached that spot on which God chose,
 In flaky torrents to pour down his fire,
 Revenging outraged Nature upon those
 So strongly wedded to depraved desire ;
 Where once was fruitful soil and country fair,
 Bituminous waters form a barren lake,
 And where they reach, with vapours load the air,
 And all around a foul effluvium make.

LXII

' This is that stagnant sea where may be thrown
 The heaviest weight, yet ne'er the bottom reach ;
 Man floats thereon—nay, steel and solid stone,
 As tho' light fir they were, or buoyant beech.
 In it a castle sits in lonely pride,
 A narrow bridge gives access to the pile :
 Here she received us, and—when once inside,
 I know not how—all nature seemed to smile.

LXIII

' The air was soft, the atmosphere serene,
 And all creation wore a joyous look ;
 There, thro' sweet groves of myrtle, ever green,
 A fountain rose, and fell a brawling brook ;
 The leaves rained dreamy music on the grass,
 And tranquil slumbers in their fall impart ;
 Birds sang : the marble and the gold I pass,
 Though marvels they of labour and of art.

LXIV

' On the smooth sward, where fell the deepest shade,
Near the soft murmur of the crystal flood,
With sculptured vases decked, a feast was laid
Of the most costly wines and daintiest food.
There was the produce of each season, there
All earth and sea could yield, or art provide ;
While round a hundred damsels, no less fair,
That smart attended, and our wants supplied.

LXV

' She with her charming smile and winning speech
Tempered the fatal food and deadly draught,
And while still seated at the table, each
A long oblivion in the goblet quaffed.
She rose and said, " I soon come back." Her look,
Returned, was not so tranquil as before ;
In her right hand a little wand she shook,
Her left a volume held of mystic lore.

LXVI

' But as the enchantress read, I felt a change
Of place, of life, volition, and of thought ;
A new desire crept o'er me (influence strange !);
I plunged into the brook—I swam—nor aught
Knew I how wondrously each limb draws in,
Nor how both arms into my body slide ;
I shrivel up ; scales take the place of skin ;
No longer man—transformed to fish, I glide.

LXVII

' Thus changed in nature and in shape were all,
And with me swam in that bright silvery stream :
What I was then, I can but now recall
As a distempered and illusive dream.
Our forms, at length, it pleased her to restore ;
But we were dumb, 'twixt wonder and affright,
When she, with brow still cloudy as before,
Menaced us with fresh witness of her might.

R

LXVIII

“Known, then,” she said, “is my supremacy,
 And what full empire o'er your lives I hold ;
 For it depends upon my will that ye,
 Eternal prisoners, ne'er Heaven's light behold ;
 Or birds become, or shoot forth spreading roots,
 Within the earth's prolific bosom sown ;
 Or, clothed with shaggy foreheads, roam as brutes ;
 To water melt, or petrify to stone.

LXIX

“Still ye may all avoid my bitter rage
 By paying strict obedience to my words ;
 Pagans become, and for our kingdom wage,
 'Gainst impious Godfrey, your avenging swords.”
 We all refused, with horror, the foul pact ;
 Alone Rambaldo the enchantress gains.
 Then—since her power 'twas vain to counteract,
 She cast us in a dungeon, bound in chains.

LXX

‘To that same castle Prince Tancredi came
 By chance, and he was made a prisoner too ;
 But a short time in durance the false dame
 Detained us ; and if what I heard be true,
 An envoy from Damascus' lord obtained
 Permission from the sorceress to bring
 Us captives back, helpless, unarmed, enchained,
 With an armed escort, to the Egyptian king.

LXXI

‘Thus we the weary road were journeying o'er,
 When, by Heaven's lofty Providence decreed,
 Gallant Rinaldo, who doth evermore
 Exalt his glory by some fresh bright deed,
 Fell in with us, nor failed at once to attack
 The knights, our guards, whom, with his wonted powers,
 He slew and conquered, and to us gave back
 The arms they wore, which formerly were ours.

LXXII

'I saw—these saw him—in that hour of strife ;
 We heard his voice, and grasped his noble hand ;
 False are the rumours that report his life
 As lost, and spread confusion thro' the land :
 But three days since he with a pilgrim guide
 Took leave of us, and unto Antioch went ;
 But, before starting, cast his arms aside,
 Bloodstained, and from repeated battle rent.'

LXXIII

Thus spoke the prince ; meanwhile his beaming eyes
 Heavenwards the hermit turned with fervent air ;
 His changing cheek and colour seemed to rise,
 And catch its sacred hues while gazing there ;
 Full of his God, and rapt with zeal sublime,
 To angel minds his spirit soared, whence he
 Unveiled the never-ending course of time,
 And pierced the secrets of futurity.

LXXIV

Then, bursting out in louder, loftier strain,
 Foretold events that would in time arise,
 While all, attracted by his look, remain
 Attentive to his thundered prophecies.
 'Rinaldo lives,' he cried ; ' what else one hears
 Are lies and tricks of woman's baleful will
 He lives ; his young and inexperienced years
 The Heavens reserve for greater glories still.

LXXV

'These boyish feats but indices supply
 Of what all Asia knows—his future fame
 Lo ! I see clearly that, as years roll by,
 He will the pride of impious monarchs tame,
 And 'neath the shadow of her silver wing
 His eagle will protect the Church and Rome,
 Them from the oppressor's claws delivering ;
 And worthy children shall adorn his home,

LXXVI

' And children's children, and their sons, who thence
Will bright and notable example have ;
Who will, from Cæsars' unjust violence
The papal mitre and our temples save ;
To oppress the proud, the lowly to restore,
The guilty punish, and defend the right,
Will be their aim ; thus past the sun will soar
Haught Este's eagle in her glorious flight.

LXXVII

' And right it is, beholding truth and light,
That she to Peter mortal thunder bring,
And that, where'er in Jesu's cause men fight,
She spread in triumph her unconquered wing,
Since, by predestined statute, Providence
To her this innate virtue has decreed ;
And wills that she, now summoned back from whence
She flew, to this great enterprise proceed.'

LXXVIII

With words like these the prudent Peter cheered
Their hearts, with terror for Rinaldo fraught :
Sole, 'mid the general joy, the chief appeared
Silent, immersed in deep and anxious thought.
Meanwhile the night in clouds of darkness rose,
And o'er earth's face her murky mantle spread ;
The rest retired to give their limbs repose,
But from Prince Godfrey's eyes all sleep had fled.

NOTES
TO
THE FIRST VOLUME.

NOTE 1.

CANTO I.—STANZA LXXVII.

Here occurs one of the errors alluded to in the Preface. Mount Seir lies very far to the southward. It is the Lebanon range—still the abode of Christians—that dominates Tripoli.

NOTE 2.

CANTO III.—STANZA XII.

This is the tower now called Goliath's.

NOTE 3.

CANTO III.—STANZA XIII.

It must have been from the Damascus Gate, whose embattled turrets, lichened with gold, present so picturesque an appearance, that Clorinda sallied forth to attack the Frank foraging party. The hill in front, now called the Cave of Jeremiah, we can readily fancy to be that on which the Christians rallied when driven back by Clorinda :

'Being there supported by the rising ground.'

A little farther down is shewn Godfrey's Tree, the supposed site of his head-quarters. Here it was that our Prince of Wales encamped during his visit to the Holy City.

NOTE 4.

CANTO III.—STANZA XXXII.

This alludes to the game of Garoselli, introduced into Italy by the Moors.

NOTE 5.

CANTO III.—STANZA LV.

The description of Jerusalem given in this and the two following stanzas is most accurate. Viewed from an eminence on the north side, close to and fronting the Damascus Gate, the two ridges are distinctly seen, the Tyropæon valley separating them and dividing the city. This valley, now partially filled up with the débris of ages, was formerly much more deep, as may be seen by an examination of the external wall, which crosses it to the south. Inside it is only ten feet high, while on the outside it is more than fifty feet.

Not far from this latter point are still visible the remains of a bridge, that, springing from the western wall of the Haram, connected it with Mount Sion.

The approach on the eastern, southern, and western side is steep, occasionally precipitous. Alone on the northern it is plain, and here the poet is very exact.

‘ Upon the fourth you go, nor seem to rise ;’

the ascent from the north-eastern to the north-western angle being very gradual.

The supply of water is the same as described by Tasso. Each house has its cistern, in which is collected the rain from the flat roofs.

The pools still exist ; the names of those of Bethesda and Hezekiah will be familiar to most readers. The former was dry, but in the latter a man was drowned during my stay at Jerusalem. As regards ‘ living springs ’ those best acquainted with the topography of Jerusalem believe in their existence, though they have not been able to discover their source. The fountain of Siloam, an intermittent spring, is known to proceed from the so-called Fountain of the Virgin, outside the town, at the end of the valley of Jehoshaphat ; and that is supposed to be derived from a source that springs within the enclosure of the Temple. The whole subject of ‘ living

water' is shrouded in great mystery, and nothing is positively known. The cardinal points are very precisely detailed in the fifty-seventh stanza.

NOTE 6.

CANTO III.—STANZA LXIV.

The tower here called 'The Angle' is the same as Goliath's, it being situated in the north-western angle of the walls.

NOTE 7.

CANTO X.—STANZA XXVIII.

The poet here describes a communication between the Western Wall and the Tower of Antonia. Of this there remains no trace, and as the passage would have had to traverse the Tyropæon valley in order to reach the latter, it is difficult to believe that such a one ever existed.

